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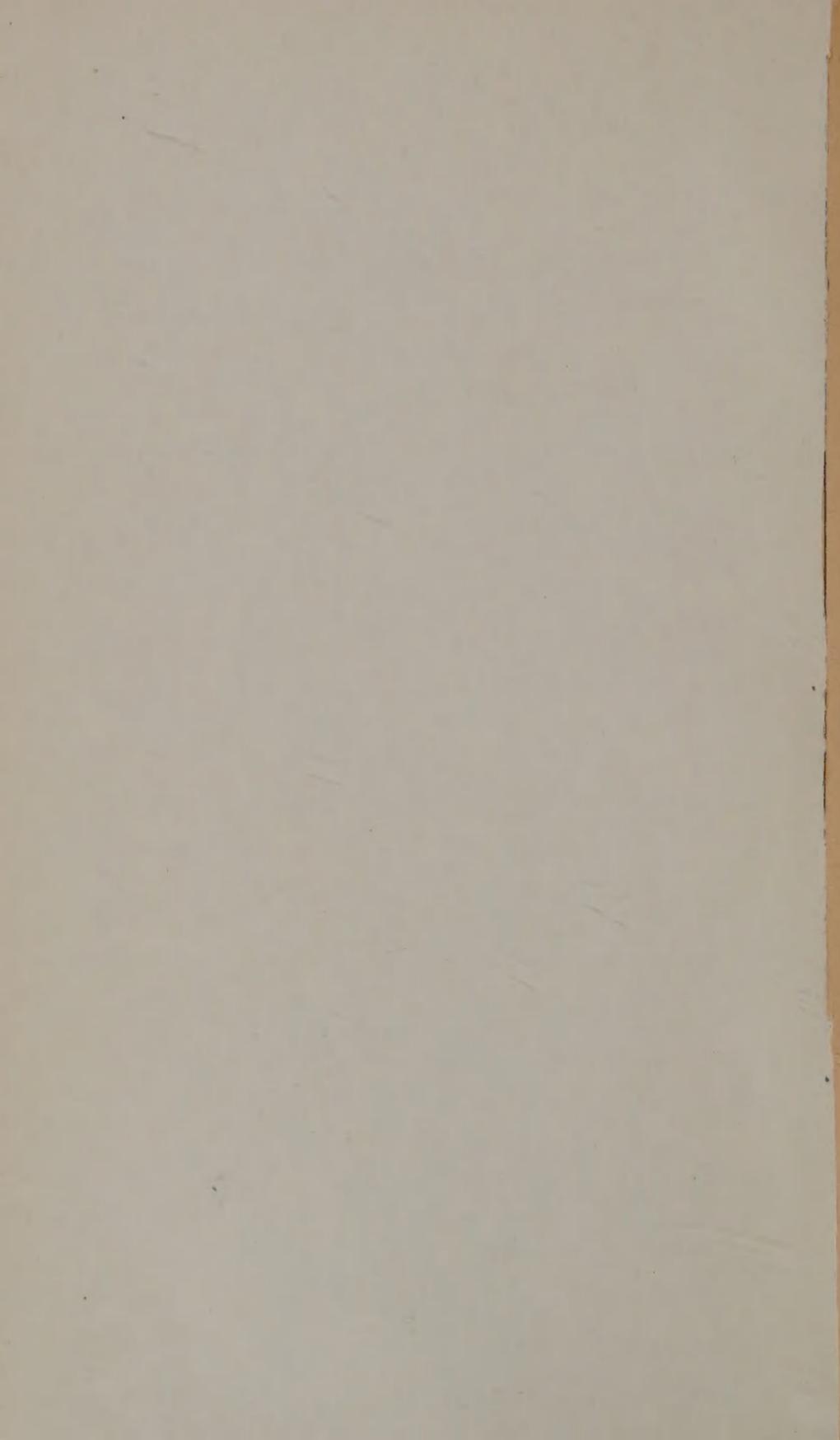
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# COMMENTARY

ON

## THE GOSPEL OF ST JOHN.

BY

ERNST WILHELM  
E. W. HENGSTENBERG, D.D., 1802-1869.  
PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY, BERLIN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

VOLUME I.

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## PREFACE.

THE author, in the last volume of his Commentary on the Apocalypse, intimated his purpose of writing a Commentary on the Gospel of St John; but he was unable to carry out his design until he had completed some labours incumbent upon him in connection with the Old Testament. He thought himself the rather justified in yielding to the impulse that first attracted him to this work,—a work in which he sought above all, and has most richly found, edification in our most holy faith,—by the fact that what has already been accomplished still leaves much to be desired in the exegesis of this Gospel. The complaint has often been made, that, among our pastors, zeal for theological science, especially in the pursuit of exegetical studies, falls far short of the standard demanded by the character of our Church, and by the earnestness of our times. The complaint is certainly well founded, but it is questionable whether the fault is not in part that of our exegetical literature. A large number of pastors who feel the burden of their office cannot be expected to devote themselves to exegetical studies as well as to their pastoral duties; we can only make the general requirement, that in their office they should not expound the Scriptures until after the most thorough preparation, such as is demanded by the dignity of God's Word. But many of the current exegetical works are little adapted for such a preparation, even injuring that frame of mind from which a sermon ought to proceed. The Commentary of Lücke, for example, with which the present work may be most appropriately compared (though it is less concerned to be brief, and merely to *indicate* the correct interpretation), certainly represents a vast progress in relation to its predecessors,—and the author would not for a moment wish to deny, or to detract from, its great merits,—but it belongs to the theology of a transitional period,

which seldom treads firmly. We miss a decided faith in Holy Scripture as the Word of God ; the struggle with doubt is magnified, and disturbs the devotional feeling of the reader ; there are frequently dangerous concessions ; and when the decision is in favour of the faith, there is, for the most part, only a small balance in its favour. In this manner the difference of opinion among expositors is brought so much into the foreground, that it diverts the attention from the text to be expounded, and the mind is hindered from quietly penetrating into the depths of its meaning. It is quite natural that pastors, in the preparation of their discourses for the sacred desk, should avoid such works, and should rather have recourse to less recent labours, as those of Starke and the *Berlenberg Bible*, though these, on the other hand, cannot afford complete satisfaction, and their exclusive use confirms the dangerous gulf existing between the theology of the ministry and the present condition of science.

The author is fully conscious of his own weakness ; but he has striven earnestly, with a firm faith in the Word of God, as granted him through Divine grace, to penetrate deeply into the meaning of this important part of it, and to emerge from the region of mere opinion, and the vacillation of the various expositions. He has used special diligence in bringing out the references of this Gospel to the Old Testament. In this respect, as in all others, he has endeavoured—with what success it is for others to judge—to accomplish for our own times what the revered Lampe, whose Commentary is still the basis for all expositions of this Gospel, did for his.

A second volume will conclude the work. A comparison with former commentaries will show that the exposition of the first six chapters, which offers so many difficulties, takes up a disproportionately larger space than the rest. A series of concluding essays will discuss the questions usually treated of in the Introduction to the Gospel.

And now to Him who gives new power to the weary, and strength to the feeble, be praise and thanksgiving, for His assistance granted in bringing to a conclusion this present volume.

# EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL OF ST JOHN.

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## CHAPTER I. 1-18.

THE Prologue to this Gospel determines in general outlines, with reference not only to His human life, but also to His pre-mundane existence, the Person, whose history forms the principal part of the subsequent narrative. In accordance with the statement in John xx. 31, with regard to the object of the whole Gospel, *viz.*, that it was written that its readers might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and believing might have life through His name, the attention is chiefly directed to the majesty of the Person of Jesus, with the design of awakening a deep feeling of reverence for the same in the hearts of the readers, that thus they may approach the narrative following with the consciousness that here they must put their shoes from off their feet, for the place whereon they stand is holy ground: this is the design which pervades the whole.

The assertion of Olshausen, that the beginning of John's Gospel contains, as it were, a history of the Logos, *i.e.*, of the various gradually ascending forms of its revelation, will not at first commend itself, as it accords little with the character of an introduction, and, on closer examination of the particulars, it is seen that the Prologue does not form an uninterrupted historical narrative, but is completed in three periods.

Vers. 1-5 give the grander features in the history of the Word,—relating how He, before all created things, was with

God, and was God ; how the world was made by Him ; how from the beginning He was the only source of life and light ; how this life and light was revealed, but was rejected. In vers. 6-13 are further details in reference to this revelation : the announcement by the Baptist, 6-8 ; the personal advent of the light, ver. 9 ; how the darkness comprehended it not, 10, 11 ; how to those, however, who received it, it proved to be the light shining in darkness, rendering them partakers of the highest happiness which exists for men, even sonship unto God, 12, 13. In vers. 14-18 is the most marked expression of the fact, the Word was made flesh,<sup>1</sup> and of exultation at the fulness of gifts and graces imparted to the human race in immediate connection with this fact. Here is more than John the Baptist ; for the Baptist himself testifies, that there is One coming after him, who was before him. Here is more than Moses ; for by Moses was only the outward letter of the law, but by Jesus Christ grace and truth have come in place of the shadow. By Him the invisible God, to whom no created being has direct and immediate access, has been brought nigh, and revealed to the human race.

The historical name of the Redeemer, Jesus Christ, does not occur till near the end of the Prologue, in ver. 17, in transition to the historical narration. All that has been previously said of the Word that was in the beginning, of the true light, of the life, is here at once connected with this well-known historical personage.

This representation of the clauses of the Prologue is opposed to the view which obtains almost universally, according to which vers. 1-5 are referred exclusively to the history of the Word previous to His incarnation. Thus Luther remarks on ver. 6 : " Such has been thus far the commencement of the Gospel of John : the Evangelist has described our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that He is the Word of the everlasting Father, and real very God with Him from eternity. . . . The same Word is also a light and life of men ; therefore all that lives, especially man, receives life from Him, and all men

<sup>1</sup> The Berleburger Bibel says, " He who has well weighed all from the first verse to this, will certainly pronounce these words very deliberately, even as, in the early churches, the words of the Nicene Creed, And was made man, were sung much more slowly than the rest."

who are at any time enlightened, become still and further enlightened, they are and shall be enlightened, by Him, who is the true light: those who thus have light and life must receive it all from Him. And also that the Word, from the beginning of the world, has at all times spoken by the patriarchs and prophets, even until John the Baptist.—Now John descends to the humanity of Christ, and says, that the Word, the Creator of all created things, the life and light of men, has become flesh; Christ has taken upon Him the human nature. And now the Evangelist begins the New Testament, the preaching of the Gospel, of Christ our Saviour, before whom goes John the Baptist, to be a witness to the Light, and to point Him out with his finger.” According to Calvin also, ver. 4 refers to the natural life, and to the light of reason. But because, he remarks on ver. 5, man by his stupidity and wickedness obscures the light which still exists within him, the Son of God must take a new office, *viz.*, that of the Mediator, who renews the corrupt man by the Spirit of regeneration. According to Quesnel, the Holy Ghost here makes known the glory of Christ, beginning with that which the Word is in Himself, vers. 1, 2; then remarking what He is to created things in general, ver. 3; and to living, spiritual, and rational creatures, ver. 4; then with respect to man, who has fallen into sin, ver. 5. According to Bengel, in vers. 1, 2, is described the condition of things *before* the creation of the world; in ver. 3, *at* the creation of the world; in ver. 4, at the time of the Fall; in ver. 5, in the time after the Fall. According to Lücke, the contents of vers. 1-5 are “the original being and essence of the Divine Logos with God, His creating, animating, and enlightening agency, in contest with the irreceptive darkness of the world.” According to Frommann,<sup>1</sup> “the statement that the Logos is the bearer of life, in ver. 4 (*ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴν ἦν*), can have in this connection no other meaning than this: that the Logos is the possessor of life in reference to the universe created by Him; *i.e.*, He bestows on the universe its life, on organic and inorganic nature, and by this means preserves it in being and secures its continuance.” In the following words, “And the life was the light of men,” rational creatures are separated from the universe of things. The same life in

<sup>1</sup> Der Johann. Lehrb. S. 160.

the Logos, by virtue of which He is Creator in the universe, bears to humanity the relation of light—or reason.

To these views we oppose another: Ver. 4 speaks, in the first instance, not of what the Word in fact affords, but designates the Logos as the only source of life and light, of blessedness and salvation; so that he who is not in communion with Him, must be without blessedness and light. And ver. 5 says, that with the appearance of the Word in the flesh, the light shone into the darkness of human existence, but was not comprehended by the darkness.

The following reasons are decisive in favour of this view, and against the opposite views:—1. According to the original passages in the prophets and the usage of John, the *life* mentioned in ver. 4 can mean no other than eternal life or blessedness, and *light* can only mean *salvation*.—2. If by *life* is to be understood natural life, it is difficult to see how the *life* can be designated the *light* of men. On the other hand, if we take the *life* and *light* as spiritual, the sense is clear. Christ, in bestowing *life*, bestows at the same time *light* and *salvation*; for in *life* consists the *salvation* of men: so long as they are in *death*, they are also in the *darkness* of misery.—3. With the opposite explanation it is necessary to supply limitations, which are not at all intimated in the text. According to Bengel, we must supply, in ver. 4, in the time before the Fall; in ver. 5, in the time after the Fall. Ver. 5 is restricted to the latter by all these expositors. But if such a limitation were to be made, it would be distinctly stated.<sup>1</sup> Since this is not done, we must suppose that the outline *here* is filled up in what follows. That the Logos was from the beginning of the creation the *life* and *light* of men, was proved by the fact, that on His appearance in the flesh, He gave to those who received Him power to become the sons of God, thus also giving them *life* and *light*. That the *light* shineth in *darkness*, and the *darkness* comprehended it not, finds its complement in the words, “And the world knew Him not,” in ver. 10, and

<sup>1</sup> How the Evangelist would then have expressed himself, is clear, e.g., from what Bengel introduces: Quum *λόγον ἀσαρχον*, sermonem sine carne, non assecuti sunt, factus est caro, ver. 14. Or the Berleb. Bibel: Then he must have begun otherwise, in order that the Person of the Word might be known.

“ His own received Him not,” in ver. 11.—4. If in ver. 5 that which is wholly past were spoken of, then it must at least have been said : The light *shone*. The present tense shows, that here a shining of the light is spoken of, which continued to that present time ; consequently, that which began with the incarnation, and continued in the agency of Him who is exalted to the right hand of the Father, and in the present existence of His Church. It may not be objected that, because in ver. 4 it is said, “ in Him *was* life,” the present, *shineth*, in ver. 5, is thus proved to be a mere historical present. Ver. 4 certainly does not speak of a manifestation of the Word as life and salvation which is already past and concluded ; it speaks rather of what the Logos was in Himself, without regard to the question, whether He was the source of creative energy.—5. If vers. 4 and 5 are to be referred to what the Logos is supposed to have accomplished for the entire human race before the incarnation, they are devoid of any analogy in the whole Gospel of John. In this Gospel, a shining of the light in the darkness of heathenism is never spoken of. An activity of the Logos in Israel before Christ is, of course, assumed by John. This is shown by the very doctrine of the Logos in connection with the Old Testament doctrine of the Angel of the Lord, and it is placed beyond a doubt by ver. 11. How otherwise could it be said that the Logos came unto His *own*? But, even if we should stop generally at the time of the incarnation, the words need not be restricted to this activity of the Logos in Israel before Christ; and then, also, the Apostle would not have designated this agency as one bestowing life and light. If, before the advent of Christ, life and salvation already existed in the flesh, how is it that the incarnate Word is first designated as the true Light in ver. 9? how is it that there is a direct opposition between Moses and Christ in ver. 17? how is it that the sonship of God, grace and truth, and the knowledge of God, are connected with the historical appearance of Christ? How can life and light exist, or how can it be said that the light has shined in the darkness, where all this was wanting, and where access thereto was denied even to those who desired it ?

## THE LOGOS.

John sets the majesty of the Person of Christ before us in the strongest light, by leading our view into the depths of the Divine Being, and pointing us to the hidden background, which is thus formed to the earthly appearance of Christ.

The important question here arises : Does John found his doctrine of the Logos, who was in the beginning with God, and was God, by whom all things were made, on the Old Testament, or is this doctrine based rather on human speculations ? Does John here walk hand in hand with Moses and the prophets, or rather with the Alexandrine Philo ?

Thus much is certain to every one who is versed in Scripture, that if points of support for this doctrine are to be found in the Old Testament, it is to be traced to these. For all analogies favour this course. The New Testament, as regards doctrine itself, and not its mere form of expression, stands in immediate connection with the canonical books of the Old Testament ; and in no case do we find ourselves referred to a middle term, and compelled, or even permitted, to go back to apocryphal or generally uncanonical literature. It is a characteristic of Old Testament prophecy, that it ceases with the prediction of the messenger who should prepare the way of the Lord before Him,—the second Elias, who should turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and of the children to their fathers ; and the New Testament begins with the appearance of this same messenger, even John, who comes in the spirit and the power of Elias. Least of all in the Apostle John should we expect an exception to the rule, a departure from the consecrated ground of the Old Testament. There is in his nature a holy ruggedness, a sharp discrimination between that which comes from above and that which is of the world, the mere product of natural development.

On closer investigation, it is seen that the Old Testament does completely furnish the necessary points of connection, and that we have no reason whatever to seek such elsewhere.

We must, first of all, consider the Old Testament doctrine of the Angel of God, or of Jehovah, who is represented as far exalted above the sphere of the inferior angels, of whom are

predicated all the attributes of the true God, who speaks in His name, claims for Himself the honours due to the Eternal, and is addressed and treated as God. In Ex. xxiii. 21, He is designated as the Angel in whom is God's name, *i.e.*, His nature as historically unfolded and attested; in Isa. Ixiii. 9, He is spoken of as the Angel of His presence (or face), *i.e.*, the Angel in whom God Himself appears, in opposition to the inferior, created angels; in Josh. v. 14, as Captain of the Lord's host, because, on account of his Godlike majesty and glory (He attributes Divine honours to Himself immediately afterwards, in ver. 15, commanding Joshua to loose his shoe from his foot, because the place was holy; and in vi. 2 He is called Jehovah), the powers of heaven, material and spiritual, the stars and the angels, are subject to Him. He appears surrounded by the latter, who are attentive to His words, in the first vision of Zechariah, where He is represented as the Protector of the covenant-people (cf. ver. 11), the Mediator between them and God, their Intercessor at the throne of grace.

The Angel of the Lord occurs first in Gen. xvi. We perceive from this passage, that wherever an appearance of Jehovah is spoken of, we are to consider this as accomplished through the medium of His Angel. In Gen. xvi. 7, we receive for the later form of expression, "and Jehovah appeared unto him," the supplementary words, "in His angel;" as also, *e.g.*, in xviii. 1. We are also led to the same result by other facts. In Gen. xxviii. 11-22, Jehovah appears to Jacob. In xxxi. 13, the Angel of God calls Himself the God of Bethel, in reference to the occurrence related in chap. xxviii. In Hos. xii. 3, He who wrestled with Jacob is called Elohim, as in Genesis, but in ver. 4, "the Angel," מלאך. Since the prophet had surely no intention of introducing a new historical particular, the ground for the mention of the Angel must lie in the presupposition, that *all* revelations of God occur through the medium of His Angel.

The Angel of the Lord occurs in Zechariah and Malachi, in connection with the doctrine concerning Christ. The former, in chap. xi., announces a personal appearance of the Angel of the Lord in the midst of His people, and the taking of the office of shepherd under Him. Malachi, in iii. 1, foretells that the Angel of the covenant will come to His temple.

That John's doctrine of the Logos is related to the Old

Testament doctrine of the Angel of the Lord, can be the less doubted, since the Apostle himself elsewhere refers frequently and unquestionably to this doctrine. Christ, in his writings, appears with unusual frequency as *sent* by God. By this expression, is everywhere intimated the personal identity of Christ with the Old Testament Angel or Messenger of the Lord; for the more immediate references, cf. my Christology, vol. iv. p. 285 (Eng. Tr.). John rests on the doctrine of the Angel of the Lord, when here, in ver. 11, he designates the covenant-people as the property of Christ; and when, in xii. 41, he says, without further explanation, that Isaiah saw the glory of Christ, while in the Old Testament it is the glory of Jehovah which is spoken of.

But we meet with a not unimportant difference also between the Logos and the Angel of the Lord. The latter appears only as a mediator between God and His people, never as He by whom God has created all things. It is, however, easily perceived, that He could not be represented as such under this name. The name of angel or messenger presupposes the existence of those to whom he can be sent. It is not a designation of nature, but the name of a special office. If, therefore, in the Old Testament, a participation in the work of creation is ascribed to the same person who, from his mediatorial relation to the covenant-people, bears the name of Angel of the Lord (as we should beforehand regard as probable, since they stand in intimate connection with each other), He must in this other relation be represented under a different name.

Now, it cannot be doubted that the Logos does occur as a partaker in the creation of the world in the passage, Prov. viii. 22–31, which for this subject is a *locus classicus*, under the name of the pre-mundane and world-forming *Wisdom* of God. It has been variously assumed that this is a purely poetical personification of one of the Divine attributes. But opposed to such a view is the fact, that what is pronounced here, according to the realistic rendering, of the second Person of the Godhead as sharing in the creation of the world, coincides with the distinction occurring elsewhere, in the doctrine of the Angel of God, between the hidden God and His Revealer. Add to this, that it could not be declared of wisdom, as an attribute of God, that it had been formed and brought forth from eternity. The realistic rendering has also the later national view in its favour.

In the apocryphal Book of Wisdom, *e.g.*, we meet with Wisdom manifestly as a person. It appears as the brightness of the everlasting light (Wisdom vii. 26), the efflux of the glory of the Almighty; the worker, who made all things, ver. 22.—Cf. viii. 6, where it is said of Wisdom, *τίς αὐτῆς τῶν ὄντων μᾶλλον ἔστι τεχνίτης*, the masculine, as in the original passage in Prov. viii. 30; and ix. 9, “Wisdom, which knoweth Thy works, and was present when Thou madest the world—;” and as she who lives with God, and whom the Lord of all things loves, viii. 3. Grimm, in his Commentary on the Book of Wisdom, p. 202, says, the author regards “the Divine Wisdom as a substance which has emanated from God, though standing in the most intimate connection with Him, to which also are ascribed Divine attributes and operations.” Besides Jesus Sirach,—whose words, *e.g.*, in Ecclesiasticus i. 4, *προτέρα πάντων ἔκτισται σοφία*, and i. 9, *κύριος αὐτὸς ἔκτισεν αὐτήν*, do not suit a mere personification of Wisdom as an attribute of God,—Philo also may be regarded as a voucher for the national view. Finally, the authority of Christ is in favour of the realistic rendering. If Luke xi. 49, 50 be compared with Matt. xxiii. 34, it cannot be a subject of doubt, that in the former passage Christ represents Himself (with reference to Prov. viii.) as the Wisdom which has appeared in the flesh: *διὰ τὸντο καὶ ἡ σοφία τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰπε*,—*q.d.*: Therefore say I, the Wisdom of God.

Against the realistic rendering only this one objection can be brought to bear, that the second Person of the Godhead cannot be represented as feminine. But the Divine Mediator of creation appears as personal Wisdom (fem.), because here He is considered according to His wisdom unfolded in the creation; as similarly, in Ecclesiastes, Solomon is represented as incarnate Wisdom (fem.), and as Christ also designates Himself as Wisdom. That the use of the feminine has this ground only, is indicated by the fact, that in ver. 30 the world-forming Wisdom is designated as *τέλος*, *work-man*, and not in the feminine.

But we will enter somewhat more particularly into the details of this important passage. It comprises ten verses, which are divided into equal parts. In the first half is declared the existence of Wisdom before all created things; in the second, her participation in the creation of the world, and that all things were created by her.

Ver. 22. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old." Instead of, He *possessed* me, many render, He *created* me. So the LXX. ἐκτισε; Jesus Sirach, Eccl. i. 4, 9, xxiv. 8; the Syriac and the Chaldee; while the Vulgate has, possedit me in initio viarum suarum. The rendering *created* cannot, however, be justified by the usage of the language, קנה meaning only *to possess*, and *to acquire*. In Gen. xiv. 19, Deut. xxxii. 6 (in the Eng. Version), Ps. cxxxix. 13, also, the meaning *created* is assumed by some without good reason: ראשית דרכו is explained as His first act, or the earliest of His works, with reference to Job xl. 19, where "He is the chief [beginning] of the ways [works] of God" is said as of the most eminent of created beings. But the following sentence, "before His works," is decisive against this view. Hitzig's rendering: *as the earliest of His works*, cannot be allowed, since קדם can only be taken in the sense of *before*. Either we must translate, *as the beginning*, and take *beginning* in the sense of *living beginning*, in whom is the cause of the beginning, the original source of all existence, in comparison with Rev. iii. 14, where Christ is designated as ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ, or we must supply the preposition בְ, as, indeed, it must be understood with קדם—Vulg.: in initio viarum suarum; so also the Syriac and the Chaldee. This latter view is favoured by comparison with Gen. i. 1. Here we obtain an exact correspondence with the ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος: when the creation began, God already possessed Wisdom, the Logos was already with Him; so that He was before all things, and only by Him did all things consist, Col. i. 17.—Ver. 23. "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." מוקדמי איז—Vulg.: antequam terra fieret; not in the first period of the earth, but before the earth, from the time which preceded the earth. It seems that the words, "I was set up," refer not to the beginning of existence in general, but to the beginning of existence as creative Wisdom; as the Vulg.: ordinata sunt; or as the older expositors remark, in reginam ac principem, per quem crearentur ac gubernarentur omnia. נסֶך occurs in the sense of *set* also in Ps. ii. 6. The same remarks hold good of the being brought forth, in ver. 24.—Ver. 24. "Where there were no depths, I was brought forth; where there were no fountains abounding with water. 25. Before the mountains were settled,

before the hills was I brought forth." There is an allusion to this passage in Job xv. 7, 8 : "Art thou the first man that was born, or wast thou made before the hills? Hast thou heard the secret of God (cf. ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, in John i. 1; and ὁ ὥν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρός, in ver. 18), and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?" Eliphaz asks Job whether he, in disgraceful self-exaltation, lays claim to the dignity which belongs to the eternal Wisdom—whether, indeed, he be himself incarnate wisdom, that he should make such assumptions.—Ver. 26. "While as yet He had not made the earth, nor the streets, nor the sum of the clods of the earth." **חוֹזֵה** occurs too frequently and exclusively with the meaning of *streets* for it to be taken in any other here. The streets are considered on account of the multitude of people which animate them. Regarded as to this, their soul, they are made by God. The parallel **תָּבִל** also signifies the earth, in so far as it is inhabited by men, the *oikoumenē*.

Ver. 27. "When He prepared the heavens, I was there; when He set a compass to the flood." This presence was not an idle one—the writer's purpose would not have led him to mention such—but an active one. Since **תְּהוֹם** always stands for the waters on the earth, especially of the sea, and also from its etymology is referred to the noise and roaring of the waves, the second clause can refer only to the work of the third day, Gen. i. 9, and the first clause to the work of the second day, Gen. i. 6–8.—Ver. 28. "When He established the clouds above, when He strengthened the fountains of the deep." Here again is a contrast of the highest and deepest parts of creation.—Ver. 29. "When He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment; when He appointed the foundations of the earth." Here sea and earth are opposed, as the heavens and earth, in the previous verse.—Ver. 30. "Then I was with Him as workman; I was daily delighted, rejoicing always before Him." **רַמָּא** has the same meaning as **רַמָּא**, workman, artificer, in Canticles vii. 1. The view on which this pointing is based, is shared, as Hitzig remarks, by the LXX., Vulgate, and Syriac Versions, and is confirmed by Wisd. vii. 22, ἡ γὰρ πάντων τεχνίτης ἐδίδαξέ με σοφία. According to Von Hofmann, **רַמָּא** is to be taken as adverbial infinitive absolute, with the meaning of *continually*. In such forced assumptions are those compelled

to take refuge who maintain the view of a mere personification. The second clause designates the joy and sacred pleasure of the creating work, which manifests itself in the endless variety of created forms. With the phrase, *I was delight*, compare Isa. v. 7; Jer. xxxi. 20. The Vulg. has, *delectabar*; the LXX., incorrectly, ἐγὼ ἦμην ὃ προσέχαιρε, He had His delight in Me.—Ver. 31. “Rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and My delight was with the sons of men.” The pleasure of creation is continued in the joy of intercourse with the children of men, in which is contained an invitation to those whom Wisdom so lovingly condescends to visit, to the equal delight of meeting her.

If now it is settled that the Old Testament affords points of connection for the doctrine of a Divine Revealer of God, and especially also of the creation of the world by Him, only one point remains in question: whether for the name Logos, under which the Divine Mediator is here spoken of, there be likewise an Old Testament foundation; or whether for this we must search for an extra-biblical point of connection.

The first question is, How is this name to be interpreted? And, in the first place, it is beyond doubt that Logos can mean only the *Word*. This interpretation is demanded simply by the usage of the language. “*O λόγος*,” says Lücke, “is never used, either by John or by any other biblical author, of the reason or understanding of God, or even of man.” If a doubt still remained, it would be removed by the unmistakeable relation in which the Logos stands to the history of creation, where all is created by the *Word* of God. “All things were made by Him,” coincides unmistakeably with “By the *Word* of the Lord were the heavens made,” in Ps. xxxiii. 6, where the LXX. has, *τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ κυρίου οἱ οὐρανοὶ ἐστερεώθησαν*.

But in what sense is the Divine Revealer called the *Word*? There are decisive grounds against the supposition that He is so called as “the Messenger of God, who utters what He is commanded to speak, and reveals to men, in part, what they are to believe, in part, what they are to do,” so that the explanation of the name is to be sought in ver. 18; or that He is so named as the subject of evangelical announcements, or as foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament, etc. All such assumptions cannot be justified by the facts. It is not then

perceived why *just here* a designation is chosen, which, outside of the Prologue, descending, as it does, into the heavenly depths of the origin of Christ, nowhere recurs in this Gospel, and must therefore stand in intimate relation to the specific contents of the Prologue. Here such a name only is appropriate, as designates pre-mundane existence, intimate communion with God and Divinity, and from which directly follows a participation in the creation of the world. That by the name Logos, the highest is designated that can be said of Christ, is shown by the antithesis of *flesh* in ver. 14; particularly when the Old Testament parallels are compared, in which flesh and God are opposed to each other. According to the same verse, the Logos, as such, has a δόξα, a glory, which He reveals. Further, according to 1 John i. 1, the Logos is the incarnate Life. But of special significance is Rev. xix. 13, which, in the recurrence of the name peculiar to John, has a signature of its Johannine origin. It is there said of Christ, "And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God." The name here must be the explanation of vesture; the destructive character being common to both, both must announce Christ as the hero, whom no created thing can withstand. A polemic name, one threatening destruction and indicating the clothing of Christ with omnipotence, is alone appropriate to this whole section.

Wherever the name Logos occurs, it is in connection with the highest and most divine that can be declared of Christ. This is inexplicable if the name were of itself such as could be given to a human mediator; it shows, that the name itself designates Christ's fulness of Divine attributes.

Now, this is in fact the case, if the name be traced back to Gen. i. and Ps. xxxiii. 6, to which latter passage ver. 3 here so plainly refers. In the history of creation, the external appearance of God, His creative agency, is designated as His speaking. For this reason, He, who is the medium of every external act of God, is designated by John the personal Word of God. If Christ be the personal Word of God, if all which is elsewhere called the Word of God be only a single fragment of His being, how could it then be conceived that any created thing could stand before Him? "I fear not what flesh can do unto me," is the watchword of all those who have the Logos

on their side. “ Undismayed, and without fear, shall the Christian e'er appear,”—this is the requirement which is laid on all members of the Church, because the Logos is their head. If single words of God have called the world into existence from nothing, how glorious must then be the Word of God,—how lively must be our fear of displeasing Him,—how unconditional our obedience to every one of His words,—how must there be given to us in connection with Him the unconditional warrant of victory over all ungodly powers, the security for the assertion, “ Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world,”—how must all longing and desire of the soul yearn to be firmly grounded and rooted in this Word of God, and thus to become partaker of all His treasures of salvation and blessedness ! Christ—the Word of God : in this is contained, on the one hand, that without Him there can be no true connection with God, as certainly as among men the word alone forms a bridge of connection ; and, on the other hand, that in connection with Him an entrance is abundantly ministered to all the treasures of salvation which are laid up in Him for needy creatures. Excellently remarks Bengel : “ The name Jesus shows especially His grace, and the name, Word of God, His majesty. How deeply must that which is designated by this name lie in the unsearchable Godhead ! The word of a man is not only that which he speaks with his mouth, and which is perceived by the sense of hearing ; but that also which he has within himself, in his mind, and which he cherishes in his thoughts. If there were not this inner word, it could not be comprised in any speech or language. And if such word is so deep within man, how deep within God, in a manner incomprehensible to us, must be His Word ! To Him, whose name is the Word of God, His enemies are all as stubble before the fire. With the spirit or breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked, Isa. xi. 4. Therefore no sinner or liar can stand before Him.”

Although ver. 18 is not to be regarded as an *explanation* of the deeper and more comprehensive name of Logos, yet what is here said of Christ, that He, as the only-begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, has revealed the nature of God, in Himself invisible, is included in the name Logos. If Christ be the eternal Word of God, there must be given in Him the only medium for the knowledge of God ; so that

every one sees just so much of God as He has seen of *Him*, perceives just so much as Christ has granted him to perceive.

From the detailed account which has been given, it is clear that all which John teaches concerning the Logos, both as to the thing signified and the name, rests on an Old Testament foundation, and that we have no reason to look elsewhere for points of connection. The Logos of John is connected with the Logos of Philo only in so far as that of Philo, which proceeded from an obscure mingling, rests likewise on an Old Testament basis. This basis is especially evident where Philo designates the Logos as the Archangel,<sup>1</sup> and the *ταξιάρχης*, or Leader of the host, in reference to the angel of the Lord, who, e.g., in Zech. i. appears surrounded by troops of inferior angels, and in Josh. v. is designated as Captain of the Lord's host. With those particulars of his doctrine of the Logos, which Philo derived from Plato or from the Stoics, the doctrine of St John, the source of which rises only in the sanctuary, has nothing whatever in common.<sup>2</sup>

Ver. 1. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”—Such words must be used of the true Saviour, of whom nothing higher can be said; otherwise there cannot be an entire and undivided consecration of the heart to Him, such as can alone bear the true fruits of righteousness, and sustain itself in trouble and in death. The Apostle, in here making the loftiest ascriptions to the Redeemer,

<sup>1</sup> As, for example, in the writing, *Quis rerum divinarum hæres*, § 42 : τῶ δὲ ἀρχαγγέλῳ καὶ πρεσβυτάρῳ λόγῳ διαρεῖν ἐξαίρετον ἔδωκεν ὁ τὸ ὅλα γεννήσας πατὴρ, ἵνα μεθόριος στὰς τὸ γενόμενον διακρίνῃ τοῦ πεποιηκότος. Ο δὲ αὐτὸς ἱκέτης μέν ἐστι τοῦ θυητοῦ υπραινοντος αἱτί, πρὸς τὸ ἀφθαρτον, πρεσβευτὴς δὲ τοῦ ἡγεμόνος πρὸς τὸ ὑπήκοον. Here we have exactly the Old Testament Angel of the Lord.

<sup>2</sup> Grossmann, *quæstiones Philoneæ*, p. ii. S. 69, says: *Quemadmodum ipsa Philonis theologia diversis ex elementis conflata est, ita τοῦ θείου λόγου quam notionem exhibuit, illa pro auctorum, quos sequitur, varietate varios subinde colores duxit. Etenim ex vulgari Judæorum opinione de angelis, utpote ministris dei geniis, est ille angelorum princeps, ἀρχάγγελος; ex mente doctrinæ Platonicæ est ιδεῖα ιδεῖν, ceteras omnes ideas sinu suo complexa, rerumque omnium τύπος, σφραγίς; ex Stoicorum sententia est anima mundi, κοινὸς λόγος ὁ διὰ πάντων ἐρχόμενος.*

speaks the confident language of revelation and inspiration,<sup>1</sup> the language of one who testifies of what he has seen and heard, who is not a debtor to some philosopheme or theologumenon, but derives from God Himself the truth which is to conduct to God. Quesnel has admirably designated the proper treatment of this utterance. “He contents himself with demonstrating to our faith His eternity, His life-communion with His Father, and His deity, without unfolding these mysteries to us. Our faith must also be content with this. In reference to this eternal, unspeakable, and inconceivable mystery, we must believe more than we reason, adore more than we define, think more than we investigate, love more than we know, humble ourselves more than we speak.”—The three clauses of the verse form a climax: only the third expresses the highest that can be said, the deity of the Word, to which the two first clauses lead indirectly, and on the presupposition of which they are based. Existence before all creatures is first ascribed to the Word, thus already preparing the way for the third clause. “Something was before the world and the creation of all things,” says Luther: “that must be God.” That the words, “in the beginning,” are equivalent to, “when as yet there was no created thing,” and that “was” here stands in the emphatic sense of, <sup>2</sup>“in the beginning, when God created the heavens and earth, the Word already *was*,”—is clear only in comparison with the opening words of Genesis. From the manifest designedness of this reference, with which it is coincident that the other Apostle among the Evangelists also takes the first words of His Gospel from Genesis,<sup>3</sup> it would be perplexing if the Apostle John had understood by the *beginning* something different from the original passage, the beginning of created things, of finite existence. *Beginning* occurs in the same sense also elsewhere in the New Testament: Matt. xix. 4 (*ό ποιήσας ἀπ' ἀρχῆς*), 8 (*ἀπ' ἀρχῆς δὲ οὐ γέγονε*); John viii. 44, where Satan is called *ἀνθρωποκτόνος ἀπ' ἀρχῆς* in reference to an event which took place in the beginning of the world, and of the human race; 1 John i. 1, ii. 13, 14, iii. 8. In these passages, the same thing

<sup>1</sup> Vitringa: *veluti extra se raptus (θεοφορηθείς) et ex abrupto, ut videtur, orationem suam orditum.*

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the *ην* in Rev. i. 4, 8, iv. 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Βίβλος γενέσεως*, Matt. i. 1, corresponds to the **ספר חילודות** of Genesis.

is designated by mere *beginning* as by *beginning of the world* in Matt. xxiv. 21, and *beginning of the creation* in Mark x. 6 (*ἀπὸ δὲ ἀρχῆς κτίσεως ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ ἐποίησεν αὐτοὺς ὁ Θεός*), xiii. 19, 2 Pet. iii. 4. *Κόσμου* or *κτίσεως* is also here to be supplied in thought. We must dismiss entirely the interpretation of Olshausen and others : “not in the beginning of creation, but in the absolute beginning, *i.e.*, from eternity.” It is contrary to the original passage, and contrary to usage. It is true that, according to the interpretation established, it is only declared of the Logos, that He already *was* at the time of creation (*ἥν*, in opposition to *create* of the heavens and earth in Gen. i. 1, and to *ἐγένετο*, as used of created things in the verses immediately following); but that this is no unimportant declaration, is seen from the fact that the same thing, existence before created beings, is declared even of God in Ps. xc. 2, and thus existence from eternity and creative activity are determined as inseparably connected : “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, art Thou, God.” If the Logos existed already at the beginning of creation, He cannot be a part of that which is created ; and this being so, He must be from everlasting, and therefore God. For there is nothing intermediate between existence before the beginning, or from the beginning, and eternal existence—between creature and God. With this corresponds what Christ declares of Himself : “Before the world was,” Jno. xvii. 5; “before the foundation of the world,” xvii. 24; and also, “I am the first,” Rev. i. 17, ii. 8, xxii. 13,—to which is immediately added, “and (for this reason) the last.” The whole creation must necessarily at last lie at the feet of Him who was before it all. Only in the interim may it boast itself sometimes, during the respite which He allows it. To Him who was in the beginning belongs also the end, and he who remains in Him should not be troubled. He can regard with sacred irony the opposition of the creature to Him who was in the beginning. He who has truly taken to heart the words of the text, his whole meditation and endeavour will be directed to this one end, that he may gain and keep Him for a friend who was in the beginning ; and he will trouble himself little concerning the favour or disfavour of others, being convinced that they cannot really help or really injure him, that their

favour is as the flower of the field, and their anger as the foam of water.

“And the Word was with God.”—Since  $\pi\rho\circ s$  is used more frequently in the New Testament than in the Classics analogously to  $\pi\rho\rho\circ\bar{a}$  with the accusative, even in the relation of rest and without the connected idea of aim (Mark vi. 3, ix. 19; Gal. iv. 18; Buttmann’s N. T. Gramm. p. 292), there is no ground for retaining, with Bengel and others, by a laboured interpretation, the idea of “motion.” (Bengel:  $\pi\rho\circ s$  denotat perpetuum quasi tendentiam Filii ad Patrem in unitate essentiæ.) With the text correspond the words, “with Thee,” in xvii. 5, and “in the bosom of the Father,” in i. 18. To the determination of His relation to the creature, is here added the determination of His relation to the Creator. This, as immediately follows from the former, since the separation from created things can rest only on the basis of connection with God, is one of most intimate communion: and from this follows the practical result, that he who would enter into a closer relation to the Most High God, must seek above all things the favour of the Logos; and that all attacks, which are directed against the Church of the Logos, can only recoil from the omnipotence of Him who stands in the most intimate communion with God. The original passages of the Old Testament are Prov. viii. 30, and Zech. xiii. 7: “Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is My fellow;” where Jehovah, on the ground of most intimate communion with Him—a communion which cannot be one merely of will, but must originally have been one of essence—designates the Messiah as His fellow.<sup>1</sup> The words of the text are of special importance, because they plainly testify the personal distinction of the Logos from God the Father, with whom He is connected by community of essence. To be with some one, can only stand of a relation between two persons. Cf. the passages already cited, Mark vi. 3, ix. 19; Gal. iv. 18. He who is with some one, must be distinct from him, with whom he is. Coincident with this passage, in its testimony to the independent personality of the Logos, is ver. 18, which speaks of the only-begotten Son, who is in the *bosom* of the Father.

<sup>1</sup> The word נִירְבָּי, here used, serves in the books of Moses to designate the most intimate connection possible among men,—not such as one can enter into arbitrarily, but such as he is born into.

“And the Word was God.”—In this the confidence of victory for the people, whose head is Jesus Christ, He in whom the Logos became flesh, receives its conclusion, its final completion. If Christ be God, all fear is folly. If God be for us, who can be against us? But then equally foolish is all dividing of the heart, all half-heartedness. Ourselves we leave, to Christ we cleave, and thus eternal joy receive: this is the immediate practical result of the truth, the Word was God. There can be no doubt that *God* is the predicate. For the Logos is the subject in the two preceding sentences, and also in ver. 2. The question throughout is, Who is the Logos? not, Who is God? After what precedes, we here expect a more precise determination of the relation which the Logos, as an independent personal being, sustains to God. Further, if *God* were the subject, then, in opposition to the second clause, the personality of the Logos, as a special one, would be cancelled: if God is the Logos, the independence of the Logos ceases. But why is the predicate placed first? The answer is: in order to indicate that the emphasis rests upon it. That the Logos is God, this forms the antithesis to the preceding vaguer determination of the glory dwelling in Him; this is a high word, to be rendered emphatically prominent, by which the believer may overcome doubt, anxiety, and pain; this is the magic formula, by which he may banish all temptation which would seduce him from the pure essence in Christ. Θεός must necessarily stand without the article. With the article, it would be declared that the Logos fills up the whole sphere of the Godhead, which would be inconsistent, since the very name of Logos presupposes an original cause which pronounced the Word. On the other hand, without the article, Θεός designates the idea of species,—God, in opposition to men or angels; and the words declare that the Logos, who according to the second clause is personally distinct from God the Father, is in His essence one with God; that not only the Father, but also the Son, is God. The decided emphasis laid on the unity of God, from the beginning to the end of Scripture, requires, with the distinction of persons, the mention also of the unity of essence in the Father and the Son. To every derogatory rendering of Θεός,—an inclination to which, inherited by us from the Deists, can only be radically extirpated when the true Godhead of Christ has been

recognised by personal heart-experience—true regeneration can proceed only from the true Godhead,—is already opposed the Old Testament doctrine of the Angel of the Lord, to which John variously refers: *e.g.*, here in ver. 11; and in xii. 41, where he says that Isaiah (chap. vi.) saw the glory of Christ, while Isaiah himself says that he saw the glory of Jehovah, that is, of His Angel. The Angel of the Lord is in Ex. xxiii. 21 designated as He in whom is the name of the Lord, His essence, as historically unfolded and attested; in xxxiii. 14, as the presence (face) of the Lord; in Isa. lxiii. 9, as the Angel of His presence (face);—as much as to say, He in whom Jehovah appears in person, in antithesis to the inferior created angels.

Ver. 2. “The same was in the beginning with God.”—The words do not contain any new particular. They are only to hold fast, during the consideration of the profound and pregnant truth, that the Saviour who appears in the weakness of the flesh, and the form of a servant, was in the beginning with God; that also behind this foreground of weakness there lies hidden a richer background of omnipotence. In all the calamities of the Church, whenever it is apparently overthrown, it confidently opposes to the assaults of the world and their prince these words: The same was in the beginning with God. He who has on his side Him who was in the beginning with God, can sleep calmly under all circumstances: he says, I fear not tens of thousands that are encamped about me. How wretched appear the Jews, who would not receive Him who was in the beginning with God! They become the object of sacred irony, as in Ps. ii. 4. How poor and ridiculous also the attacks of the heathen, which had doubtless commenced when John wrote his Gospel! To Him, who was in the beginning with God, the heathen are but as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance, Isa. xl. 15. He who has really taken to heart the words, “The same was in the beginning with God,” will recognise it as the highest aim of his life to enter into most intimate fellowship with the Logos, that every breath may be consecrated to Him. “O eternal Word,” exclaims Quesnel, “inseparable from Thine everlasting foundation, adorable Son, who never leavest the bosom of Thy Father, may I never be separated from Thee, and unite me in Thyself

with Thy Father!" In Rev. iii. 14, Christ is called "the beginning of the creation of God." If He was in the beginning with God, when as yet there was no created thing, He must also be *the* beginning, He in whom the beginning is grounded, the living beginning.

Ver. 3. "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made."—The Berleburger Bibel says: "Hitherto the Word has been described as in the bosom of the Father; now He is described as He reveals Himself in creation." The answer to the question, "Why this express testimony, that all things were made through the mediation of the Logos?" is given by Luther in the words: "If Christ does not remain truly and by nature God, born of the Father in eternity, and Creator of all things, then we are lost. For how could we be helped by the sufferings and death of Christ, if He were only a man like you and I? Then He could not have overcome devil, death, and sin; He would have been too weak for them: He would also have been unable to help us. Therefore we must have a Saviour who is very God, and Lord over sin, death, and devil. If we allow the devil to subvert this foundation, and hold that Christ is not very God, then His passion, death, and resurrection are of no use to us, and we have no hope of obtaining eternal life and happiness; in fine, we cannot at all comfort ourselves by all the consoling promises of Scripture. But if we are to be helped from the devil's violence and death-blows, also from sin and death, we must have an everlasting Good, to which nothing is wanting, and in which is no fault. So this article, that Christ is by nature very God and very man, is our rock, on which our salvation and bliss are founded, on which we are baptized, on which we live and die. And St John, as the pattern Evangelist, has powerfully described the deity of the Lord Christ; and that the world, heaven, earth, all creatures, visible and invisible, were created by Him, and that nothing was made but by this Word of the Father." We have here before us no idle speculation,—much rather an anchorage-ground of hope for the mind that is troubled through fear of the creature, the basis for that word of the Lord: "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." To the all things made by the Logos,—which must therefore serve Him unconditionally, and pay

homage to Him, either willingly or by compulsion,—belong also the angels, whose ministering relation to Christ and His kingdom is rendered expressly prominent by ver. 51, and Satan, the prince of this world, which he is continually exciting against the kingdom of Christ. But the practical signification reaches still further. “All creatures,” says Quesnel, “owe allegiance to Him, both on account of their existence, whose ground He is, through the power which He has in common with His Father, and on account of the manner of their existence, for which He is the archetype, and the Divine skill, as the eternal Wisdom, from which all creatures have all that they possess of beauty, order, and proportion, among each other, and in relation to the plans of God. O that I may seek Thee, study Thee, adore Thee, in all Thy creatures! Grant that they may lead me to Thee,—that I may ever give all the glory to Thee,—that I may not be deaf to so many voices, which unceasingly tell me, that it is Thou who hast created them, that it is Thou and not they whom we must follow.” It is clear from the comparison of 1 Cor. viii. 6 and Heb. i. 2, that the preposition  $\delta\alpha$  is used to indicate that the Logos occupies a mediatorial position in the creation of the world, God the Father being the original cause of the creative work.  $\Delta\alpha$  does indeed occur of God the Father in Gal. i. 1, Heb. ii. 10; but never  $\epsilon\xi$  of Christ. Together with the accomplishment of the creation through Christ, it is immediately granted, that to Him belong also the preservation and government of the world. Luther says, “He is not a master, who, like a carpenter or builder, when he has prepared, completed, arranged a house, ship, or any other work that he may please, leaves the house for its owner to dwell in, or commits the ship to the mariners that they may traverse the sea in it, and he himself goes whither he may. It is not so here; but God the Father has begun and finished the creation of all things by His word, and preserves it also continually by the same, and remains with His work, which He creates, until He wills that it shall no longer exist. For this reason, says Christ (John v. 13), ‘My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.’ For, as we were made by Him, without our assistance and power, so also we cannot be preserved of ourselves. Therefore, as heaven, earth, sun, moon, stars, men, and all that lives, were created by the Word in the beginning, so they are wonder-

fully governed and preserved by the same Word. Thus, when St John says, all that is made was made by the Word, we are to understand that all things so created are preserved in being, otherwise they would not long remain created."

The second clause adds no new matter; the repetition only directs attention to the deep significance of the truth, as for the same reason such repetitions occur in the history of the flood, e.g., Gen. vii. 13-16. If without Christ nothing was made that was made, then nothing made by Him can do any injury to His kingdom. Fear loves to make exceptions, it allows all else to be innocuous; only that one thing which is directly in view, appears to threaten danger. This is met by the Holy Spirit with the assurance, that all things without exception were made by the Logos; therefore, *every* fear is unreasonable in him who has the Word on his side. If to be made, and to be made by Him, are the same thing, there can be no enemy that is to be feared, either in heaven or earth. The same practical *tendency*, to show that no force in heaven or earth is a match for Christ, that all are under obligation to serve and honour Him, an equally emphatic designation of *all* and *every*, and also a certain pleonasm of expression, are found in the parallel passage, Col. i. 16: ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα, τὰ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, τὰ ὄρατὰ καὶ ἀόρατα, εἴτε θρόνοι, εἴτε κυριότητες, εἴτε ἀρχαὶ, εἴτε ἔξουσίαι τὰ πάντα δὶ' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἐκτίσται. It is a poor supposition, that John here placed himself in opposition to the Judaistic Gnosis, which excluded the *ὕλη*, or matter, from the Divine creation. It is not the *Divine* creation which is here treated of, but the participation of the Logos in the creation; and it is more consonant that the Apostle should wish to afford consolation in a trial common to all Christian hearts, than that he should have regard to some obscure hypercritic. Included in that which is made, are also the enemies of Christ and His Church. And of how great practical significance is it, that even from our birth we are under obligation to our Redeemer and Saviour, as our Creator,—that the Creator of all things has taken upon Him our nature, and has come to seek the lost! The words, "that was made," *δὲ γέγονεν*, are not absolutely necessary to the sense. Yet this redundancy of expression bears the character of solemnity, and rouses the attention to the great importance of the thought. The logical

unnecessariness of δὲ γέγονεν has led some to join it to what follows. This punctuation is quite ancient. It is found in Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, and Clement of Alexandria. But since the science of exegesis has passed its infancy, all approved expositors have declared themselves in decided opposition to it.<sup>1</sup> We should then either connect, δὲ γέγονεν, ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴν ἦν, or, δὲ γέγονεν ἐν αὐτῷ, ζωὴν ἦν. The former is the more ancient reading. As to sense, both amount to the same. For even in the latter reading, the Logos, or the creation by Him, is to be regarded as the ground of the life of creatures,—*q.d.*, that which was created by Him, was on this very account life. Both readings, however, rest on the false assumption, that ver. 4 refers to creation, instead of to redemption. They give way of themselves when it is perceived that ζωή is not natural life, but eternal life or salvation. The thought, that all things made have their life, the source of their life, in the Logos, even were it a reasonable one, is impossible here, since ζωή, according to the usage of John, cannot be the natural life. The second decisive reason against it is, that then the words, “And the life was the light of men,” are not suitable. These words require that the life be not, as according to this interpretation, the creaturely life, but the life which has its source in the Logos Himself. The interpretation owes its origin, as it seems, to those who, mistaking the simple practical meaning of the Prologue, misinterpreted it in the sense of their speculative tendencies.

Ver. 4. “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.” —Luther says: “When he says, in Him was life, and the life was the light of men, these are thunder-claps against the light of reason, free will, human ability, etc. As if he would say: All men who are out of Christ, lack life before God, are dead and damned.” Köstlin has admirably developed the idea of life (Joh. Lehrbegr. S. 235): “The expression ζωή denotes

<sup>1</sup> Calvin, *e.g.*, says: Qui particulam istam: quod factum est, disjungunt a superiore oratione ut ad sequentem sententiam annexant, coactum sensum adducunt: quod factum est, in ipso erat vita, h. e. vivebat aut in vita sustinebatur. Sed hunc loquendi modum nusquam creaturis attribui ostendent. Lampe: repugnat autem hæc lectio tum fidei exemplarium, inter quæ unum tantum reperit Millius, quod huic interpretationi faveat, tum bono sensui. Quomodo enim vita ejus, quod factum est, lux hominum dici potest?

that life which is really life, the direct opposite of death,—one absolutely efficient, disturbed by no obstruction to its course, by no disgust, but a blessed life, a life which is raised above all creaturely perishability and weakness.” In this emphatic sense, in which the conception of life is closely connected with that of salvation, *life* occurs in Deut. xxx. 20, where it is said by God to Israel, “For He is thy life;” as much as to say, only through Him canst thou find an existence which really deserves the name of life, and of which it could not be declared, “Thou hast a name to live, but art dead.” What is there said of Jehovah, is here transferred to Christ. The same remark holds good of Ps. xxxvi. 9 ; the more so, since there, as here, life is connected with light: “For with Thee is the fountain of life: in Thy light shall we see light.” He who derives it not from Thee, the only source of life and salvation, loses it, in spite of all the human means which he possesses for preserving and gaining it. But, on the other hand, he who has this fountain at command, the wickedness of the whole world cannot take the life from him ; he preserves his life, and drinks with delight in the presence of his enemies. In Prov. iii. 18, it is said of Wisdom, between whom and the Logos there is so intimate a relation, “She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her;” and in Prov. viii. 35, 36, Wisdom says, “For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.” According to Calvin and others, preservation is here ascribed to Christ, as creation in the previous verse. The life is natural life. “If His constant influence did not quicken the world, all things that have power must immediately fall to ruin or be destroyed.” That which Paul ascribes to God in Acts xvii. 28, that in Him we live and move, takes place, according to the Evangelist, through the beneficence of the Word. Lücke also is of opinion that “John has not yet any thought of the historical Christ;” and by *life*, he understands the physical and ethical life, which exists apart from Christ. But, on the other hand, Köstlin has already remarked, the words are to be explained, not from Philo, but from John himself, who everywhere represents life as coming into the world only with Christ, and does not see fit to say anything of the continued preservation of the world by the Logos. Even in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, ζωή, life, is

generally used of spiritual eternal life, or salvation,—of natural life, only in Luke xvi. 25. *Zωή* alone is interchanged with *ζωὴν αἰώνιος*, which alone can be called a true life, as certainly as in Gen. ii. 17 it is said, “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,” according to which the natural life is only a concealed death. In John, *ζωή* occurs more than thirty times, always of spiritual eternal life, or salvation, which can be obtained only by joining the Word, who has appeared in the flesh, the “historical Christ,” and can never be obtained apart from Him. In an entire series of passages *ζωή* is used interchangeably with *ζωὴν αἰώνιος*. So, e.g., in John iii. 15, 36: ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται, ἀλλ’ ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον. ‘Ο πιστεύων εἰς τὸν νιὸν ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον, ὁ δὲ ἀπειθῶν τῷ νιῷ οὐκ ὄψεται ζωῆν. Here *ζωή* is explained by the preceding *ζωὴν αἰώνιος*. Cf. v. 24-26, v. 39, 40, vi. 33, 35, 47, 48, 53; 1 John i. 1. Everywhere in these passages life is connected with the advent of Christ in the flesh. As it is here said, that in the Logos was the life, so Jesus, in xiv. 6, calls Himself the Life. In the strikingly accordant passage, 1 John v. 11—*ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἔδωκεν ἡμῖν ὁ Θεός, καὶ αὕτη ἡ ζωὴ ἐν τῷ νιῷ αὐτοῦ ἐστιν*—life = salvation, and the life has its only source in Christ. According to all this, and since, according to proof yet to be adduced, the parallel *light* also cannot be separated from Christ, the words, “in Him was light,” must refer to the fact, *that from the beginning of the rational creation, its life was in the Logos; so that it was excluded from life, so long as Christ had not appeared in the flesh.* What a powerful practical impulse is there in the words, “in Him was life!” If the Logos—if Christ, in whom the Logos has become accessible to us—be the single point and source of life in the whole wide universe, the whole energy of the mind must be directed towards entering into, and persevering in, communion with Him.

“And the life was the light of men.”—‘*H* *ζωή* is not life in the abstract, but personal life in the Word; *q.d.*, He, the bestower of life, existed at the same time as such. The light is, according to vers. 8, 9, the Logos Himself.<sup>1</sup> The thought cannot have been here of a beaming of the light into the in-

<sup>1</sup> Lampe: Sub symbolo lucis verbum proponere Johannes impense amat in hujus capitinis nexu, quod procul dubio ab ipso Domino didicit, qui eo de propria persona saepiuscule est usus. P. 1. 12, 35.

telligent creation in the times before Christ, "of a continued enlightening activity of the Logos in general history, and not merely among the Jews." For of such a doctrine we can find no traces elsewhere in John. The assertion that, according to xi. 52, x. 16, he is aware of a preparatory revelation in the heathen world, rests on an incorrect apprehension. In the first passage, the "scattered children of God" in the heathen world are brought into view, not according to their subjective condition, but according to the Divine choice and predetermination.<sup>1</sup> "Divine life, preformed Christian sonship of God," outside the boundaries of the kingdom of God, in the heathen world, is a representation current indeed with the modern accommodation-theology, but not with John. We are not to think of Israel alone, since men in general are spoken of; and even if there certainly were an activity of the Logos among the Jews, yet the Light of the Future was reserved even from them. If, according to ver. 17, grace and truth came to the covenant-people first by Christ, life and light are denied to them before Christ. In the New Testament, light is the ordinary designation of salvation. In Ps. xxvii. 1, "The Lord is my light and my salvation," we have the interpretation of the figure. In Isa. xlix. 6 (Acts xiii. 47) it is said of Christ, "I will also give Thee to be a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth." When Israel, in Micah vii. 8, says, "When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me," the thought is, when I am in misery, the Lord is my salvation. That *light* is to be taken in this sense here, is sufficiently proved by ver. 5, especially by the contrast of darkness, by which only wickedness can be understood. In this sense, Christ in various connections calls Himself the Light, and is so called by John, always in such a manner that it is either expressly stated or assumed that the light did not shine until His advent in the flesh. So, e.g., in iii. 19, τὸ φῶς ἐλήλυθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον : viii. 12, ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου, ὁ ἀκολουθῶν ἐμοὶ οὐ μὴ περιπατήσει ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ, ἀλλ' ἔξει τὸ φῶς τῆς ζωῆς, where, as here, light is connected with life: xii. 35, ἔτι μικρὸν χρόνον τὸ φῶς ἐν ὑμῖν ἔστι. περιπατέστε ἔως τὸ φῶς ἔχετε, ἵνα μὴ σκοτίᾳ ὑμᾶς καταλάβῃ: but especially ix. 5, ὅταν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ὦ, φῶς εἴμι τοῦ κόσμου,

<sup>1</sup> Bengel: Respectu præcognitionis divinæ et quia revera futuri erant filii Dei.

where to be light, and to be in the world, are represented as inseparably connected. We are also led to the view that *light* is here a designation of the salvation which should be brought to the human race by the advent of Christ, by the original passages in the prophets. We must first of all consider the passage in Isa. ix. 2, which Matthew expressly adduces, and which exercises a controlling influence over his representation.<sup>1</sup> “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.” Not only is the figure of light common to this passage and our text, but also the mention of darkness, in ver. 5 here, and the connection of life and light in John corresponds with the shadow of death in Isaiah. John would contradict this passage if he declared that the Logos had already made Himself known as light, before He became flesh. In Isaiah also *light* is the designation of salvation. The darkness which is to be dispelled by the light, is designated as at the same time external and spiritual wretchedness. “The sad companion of outward oppression by the Gentile world, is the spiritual misery of the inward dependence on it.” In Isa. xlii. 6, also, the Lord speaks to His Servant, the Messiah, “I will give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles.” Only in the future is the Servant of God to become this. “*Light* is here, according to the common *usus loquendi* of Scripture, a figurative designation of *salvation*. In the parallel passage, xlix. 6, *light* is at once explained by *salvation*. The designation proceeds upon the supposition that the Gentiles, not less than Israel (cf. ix. 1), shall, until the appearance of the Servant of God, sit in darkness and the shadow of death ;—that they are in misery, even though in some instances it may be a brilliant misery.” If before Christ both Israel and the heathen are in darkness, the real enjoyment of the light cannot here be ascribed to men in the period before Christ. According to ver. 7, the Servant of God alone is to bring out those who sit in darkness. In addition to Isa. xlii. 6, it is said in xlix. 6, “And I will also give Thee for a light to the

<sup>1</sup> Lampe : Præ reliquis censemus allusum esse ad Jes. ix. 1, tum quia ejus usus reliquis etiam viris θεοπνεύστοις N. T. familiaris fuit, uti patet ex citatione Zachariæ, Luc. i. 78, et Matthæi iv. 16, tum quia verba ipsa analogiam satis evidentem habent. Nam et hic de luce in tenebris splendente agitur.

Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation to the end of the earth." We must also take into view Isa. lx. 1-3, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. 2. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. 3. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." In the words, "thy light is come," light is a personal salvation; therefore, the Lord as Saviour. This is shown by vers. 19, 20, compared with the last clause, "and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." According to this passage also, until the advent of Christ darkness covers not merely the Gentiles, but also the Jews. Christ shines first as a clear light on the darkness of the Jews, and the Gentiles come to this light that they may be irradiated by its beams. In harmony with this does Zacharias (Luke i. 78, 79) rejoice that "the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death." And John himself, while in vers. 7-11 he designates Christ as the light, the true light which is come into the world, to His own, proceeds on the conception that previously the world, and even the chosen people, were without the light, and sat in darkness. After all this, there can be no doubt of the correctness of Heumann's remark, "But at what time He became this light, we are taught by ver. 9, from which we learn that He became the light of men when He came into the world. The Word therefore became, as Christ calls Himself (John viii. 12), the light of life." The thought of the whole verse can only be this: that the Logos, from the beginning, was the *virtual* life and light of men; so that, before He appeared in the flesh, men were excluded from light and life. The words, "in Him was," *ην*, are certainly to be distinguished from those in 1 John i. 2, "for the life was manifested," *η ζωή ἐφανερώθη*. In the former, the being manifested forms an antithesis to the being from the beginning. Analogous is Rev. xii. 11, where the words, "they overcame him," refer to the power dwelling in the atoning death of Christ, and in substance are equivalent to: they can now overcome him. So also Rev. iv. 5, where the lightnings, thunderings, and voices proceeding from the throne have a prefigurative sense, indicating the fulness of judgment dwelling

in God which is to be manifested at its proper time. So here life and light are that which exists in the Logos for the whole human race, and which in its due time, when the day of salvation and grace is come (Isa. xlix. 8 ; 2 Cor. vi. 2), is to be poured out upon it.<sup>1</sup> If the life and light of men have been from the beginning only in the Logos, this, as man's highest motive to Christ, seems to say : " Besides Thee there is nothing but folly and falsehood, darkness and sin, death and misery. Open and illumine my mind, penetrate and warm my heart, because my happiness consists in this, to know and to love Thee" (Quesnel).

Ver. 5. " And the light shineth in darkness ; and the darkness comprehended it not."—We must unconditionally reject the remark of Olshausen : " We are in no case to refer *φαίνει* to the activity of the incarnate Word ; this meets us first in ver. 14 as an historical fact." That the agency here is not that " which was exercised by the Logos from the beginning," but that which proceeded from the " historical Christ," is shown by the Old Testament passages, Isa. ix. 1, xlvi. 6, xlix. 6, lx. 1, by the declaration of Zacharias, Luke i. 79, and of Christ Himself, viii. 12, 36. That the *present*, *φαίνει*, here is to be taken as designating an activity which continues to the present time, is clear from the relation of the preceding *ἦν*, " was," and still more decisively from 1 John ii. 8, *ἡ σκοτία παράγεται, καὶ τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινὸν ἥδη φαίνει*. *Darkness* is the condition of the man who lives out of connection with God, or reprobacy, sin, and the evils inseparable therefrom. *Σκοτία*, correctly remarks Köstlin, " designates not only the deficient religious condition, but always, at the same time, also the dark fate of the subject consequent thereon,—the deficiency not only in the light of truth, but also in that of life." Thus, as light is the personal Light, so darkness is here a designation of the men who are in darkness ;—according to Isa. ix. 2, " The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light ;" according to the explanation in the subsequent verse (" He came to His own, and His own received Him not") ; and because the words, " comprehended

<sup>1</sup> Lampe has already given the correct interpretation : In redemtione, ver. 4 et 5, ubi primo Verbum tanquam verus salutis fons describitur, secundo neglectus ejus ita indicatur, ut patere queat, illum nihil splendori ejus præjudicare.

it not," indicate an accomplished fact, in which the heathen had as yet no part;—the Jews, the benighted people of the covenant and possession.<sup>1</sup> *Καταλαμβάνειν* elsewhere in the New Testament always means *to take*: xii. 35; Mark ix. 18; 1 Cor. ix. 24; Phil. iii. 12, 13. In the sense of *comprehend*, *perceive*, it occurs only in the middle voice, Acts iv. 13, x. 34. Most analogous is Rom. ix. 30, *κατέλαβε δικαιοσύνην*. Because the Jews had not stretched out the hand of faith to seize the light, therefore darkness had seized upon them, xii. 35. The reason why they had not received it, is disclosed by our Lord in Matt. xxiii. 37, "and ye would not;" and still more clearly by John in iii. 19, "Light is come into the world, and men (represented by the Jews) loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." They would gladly have escaped the dark fate which weighed heavy upon them; but the dark disposition, of which this fate was the reflex, they would not renounce at any price, and thus their darkness was doubled by their own fault. "But although," says Luther, "the bad, blind world desires not the dear light, nay, cannot endure it, but persecutes and reviles it, yet it shines from the special grace of the true eternal Light, for the sake of the little flock which is to be enlightened by it, and does not set on account of the thanklessness and disdain of the great godless multitude."

The Apostle now carries out further, in vers. 6-13, what he had intimated in ver. 5, and shows how Christ, as the true Light, shone among the Jews, and was by them rejected, but proved Himself the true Light by imparting to those who received Him the highest of all gifts, the sonship of God. This was a necessary addition. It furnishes the warrant, that the apprehension on which the words, "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not," and their carrying out, are founded,—the conception according to which light is attributed to Christ, and darkness to the Jews,—rests *not* on a subjective view, but is founded in the matter itself. He who can raise to the dignity of sons of God, must be the Light and Life:

<sup>1</sup> Lampe: In concreto hic per tenebras intelligit Judaismum. De illis enim tenebris loquitur, quæ lucem non receperunt, quod ver. 11 diserte ad τὰ ἴδια τοῦ λόγου applicatur—Hic sigillatim scopus erat totius Evangelii, ut tenebræ illæ contra lucem se conspissantes redarguerentur ac præjudicium inde nascentes eximeretur.

He can be no other than the Creator Himself ; for only the Creator can prove Himself the true Redeemer.

We are first told, in vers. 6-8, how John the Baptist prepares the way for the appearance of the Light. “ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.” The periphrasis, ἐγένετο ἀπεσταλμένος, may be used instead of the simple form of the tense, because the representation in the Prologue is characterized by a certain solemn grandeur. Perhaps, however, we must seek the reason for it in that ἀπεσταλμένος here, and ἔρχόμενος in ver. 9, are both words referring to Malachi, which are to make themselves known as such by the unusual construction. The reference to Mal. iii. 1, “ Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me,” and to iv. 5, “ Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet,” cannot, of course, be subject to doubt. The Baptist refers to the same passage in iii. 28, αὐτὸὶ ὑμεῖς μοι μαρτυρεῖτε ὅτι εἰπον· οὐκ εἴμι ἐγὼ ὁ Χριστὸς, ἀλλ’ ὅτι ἀπεσταλμένος εἴμι ἔμπροσθεν αὐτοῦ : and our Lord, in Matt. xi. 10, οὗτος γάρ ἐστι περὶ οὐ γέγραπται ἴδον ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου, ὃς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδόν σου ἔμπροσθέν σου. It is a characteristic of John as an author, that he seldom gives express quotations from the Old Testament, but introduces references to it by way of gentle hint,—a phenomenon which is also found in the prophets of the old covenant in relation to the books of Moses. The reason lies in this, that frequent quotations would not suit the higher style in which this Gospel is written. *Ἄνθρωπος* in this connection, where all is directed to the end of exalting Christ in relation to John, is certainly not = *τίς*. In the original passage, Mal. iii. 1, the heavenly messenger and the earthly, the human and the divine, are opposed as strongly as possible. The name John, which was given him by the Lord Himself, Luke i. 13, signifies, *the Lord is gracious*; and was therefore well adapted to the messenger who should announce the dawn of that time of which the Psalmist had prophesied, “ Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion : for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come : ” Ps. cii. 14.<sup>1</sup> That the name was chosen on account of its significance, may be regarded as certain. But it is doubtful whether the Evangelist

<sup>1</sup> Lampe: Tempus, quo prodibat Johannes, præcise illud erat, quo Deus in Christo volebat mundo se propitium demonstrare. Apparuerat jam

has regard to this significance here. Thus much is certain, that he laid great weight on his *own name*; that in the love of Jesus he perceived a realization of it, proceeding from the intuition that in Jesus Jehovah had been manifested. The passages, xxi. 20, xx. 2, where John, in evident allusion to his own name, designates himself as  $\delta\nu\ \eta\gamma\alpha\pi\alpha\ \delta\iota\ 'I\eta\sigmao\bar{v}\delta$ ,  $\delta\nu\ \epsilon\phi\iota\lambda\epsilon\iota\ \delta\iota\ 'I\eta\sigmao\bar{v}\delta$ , plainly show this.

Ver. 7. “The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.”—“Witness” is a favourite expression with John: it recurs with equal frequency in the Gospel, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse (fourteen times in the Gospel), while in Matthew it does not occur at all. “John has confined himself, as a pattern for us, to the testimony, and for this has given his life and his death. We have inherited all the favours which fell to the lot of the Jews, and we owe him the gratitude which they did not show.” (Quesnel.) It scarcely needs remarking, that  $a\upsilon\tau o\bar{v}$  refers to John, who should prepare the way before Christ, *i.e.*, should awaken faith in Him,—not to the Light.

Ver. 8. “He was not that Light, but to bear witness of that Light.”—“No man can enlighten us, not even a St John; the Word of God, the everlasting Truth, is alone our Light.” Olshausen, with many other commentators, is of opinion that “the words are evidently directed polemically against too high an estimate of John.” Appeal is made to Luke iii. 15, according to which, on his appearance, many mused in their hearts whether he were the Messiah or not, and to the sayings of the disciples of John, in John iii. 26. But the assumption of such a polemic reference does not accord with the time of the composition of the Gospel. From the decided manner in which John pointed away from himself and to Christ, scarcely any perishing mortals could have thought of taking John himself for the Light or Saviour. And to have respect to such, is least of all suitable to the Prologue, which portrays only in outlines. The true ground of the remark is this, that the Apostle wishes to set the greatness of Christ in a clear light by showing that the greatest of men, the greatest of the prophets of the *tempus gratiam conferendi populo Dei*, Ps. cii. 14, quod in benedictione sacerdotali, Num. vi. 24, tamdiu Israeli optatum erat, et quod Israel tamdiu supplex rogaverat. Ps. cxxiii. 3.

Old Covenant (Matt. xi. 11; Luke vii. 28), in relation to Him, takes throughout a subordinate position. In John the whole human race lies at the feet of Christ. To testify of Him is the highest dignity to which man can attain, the highest object towards which man may or should aspire. Therefore the shading of John is to heighten the light of Christ; to bring His glory into view being the ultimate end of the whole Prologue.

In vers. 9–11 are related the appearance of the Light, and its rejection by those whose darkness it came first to illuminate.

Ver. 9. “That was the true Light, which lighteth every man, coming into the world.”—There can be no doubt that *ἥν ἐρχόμενον* stands for the simple “came.” Against the rendering, *it was to come*, which rests on a view of the course of thought in the Prologue already refuted, Lücke has already remarked, “According to classical usage, *ἥν—ἐρχόμενον* would be impossible as a periphrastic future (*erat venturum*). In the New Testament also this would be the only instance. On the other hand, such a paraphrase of the imperfect has numerous analogies in its favour in the New Testament.” It is a question, however, why this is here chosen, why John uses a circumlocution to express what he could say more concisely and plainly by a single word; the rather, as elsewhere he uses the simple tense-form for the same matter, *τὸ φῶς ἐλήλυθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον*, iii. 19, xii. 46, xviii. 37. A sufficient reason for this here would be the breadth peculiar to the Prologue, which retains the reader, as it were, in these lofty truths, and invites him to reflection and meditation. Yet another explanation offers itself with some plausibility,—viz., that the phrase *ἥν—ἐρχόμενον* renders prominent the reference to the original prophecy of Malachi. The great “Coming One” of Malachi was in the mouth of all. ‘*O δὲ ὁπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος*,’—thus speaks the Baptist in Matt. iii. 11. Σὺ εἰ ὁ ἐρχόμενος; he directs his disciples to inquire of Christ, Matt. xi. 3. In this first chapter he speaks of the *ὁπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος*, vers. 15, 27, 30. In iii. 31 he says, ὁ ἄνωθεν ἐρχόμενος ἐπάνω πάντων ἔστι, and ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐρχόμενος ἐπάνω πάντων ἔστι. In vi. 14 the people say of Jesus, *οὗτός ἔστιν ἀληθῶς ὁ προφήτης ὁ ἐρχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον*. Martha says to Christ in xi. 27, *ἔγώ πεπίστευκα ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς, ὁ νιὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ εἰς*

*τὸν κόσμον ἐρχόμενος.* The word *ἐρχόμενος* is here, as it were, provided with marks of quotation. The expression, *come into the world*, is set apart, as it were, by John for the advent of Christ in the flesh. It is used by the people, vi. 14, xi. 27; by the Baptist, iii. 31; by Christ, xii. 46, xviii. 37, xvi. 28; by the Evangelist, iii. 19. Even this extended use leads to an Old Testament foundation, as the phrase is not sufficiently significant to explain of itself such an extended use. The reference to Mal. iii. 1, “The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts,” is the more apparent, since the word “come” is emphatically repeated here, and recurs once again in ver. 2, “But who may abide the day of His coming?” and since it is thus explained why precisely John the Baptist so repeatedly and so diligently designates Christ as the Coming One. For him, this passage was, as it were, the basis of his existence, the programme of his appearance, the defining of his position with respect to Christ. With reference to this passage, which again refers back to Gen. xlix. 10, “until Shiloh come” (so also, as it seems, the words, *ὅτι Μεσσίας ἐρχεται*, of the Samaritan woman, in John iv. 25), the Messiah is designated both merely as the Coming One, and as the One coming *into the world*. The mere coming is expanded into coming into the world, in intimation that in Malachi the covenant Angel had a heavenly existence prior to His advent into the sublunary world: it is the Lord of heaven who comes to the covenant people as to His own.—The *true Light*: Christ is so called, not so much in opposition to a false as to an imperfect light, such as was John the Baptist. “This is the difference,” says Calvin, “that which is light in the heavens and earth derives its brightness elsewhere. But Christ is the Light, which shines of itself; for the whole world is irradiated by its brightness, so that there is nowhere any other origin or cause of the radiance. He therefore calls that the true Light whose nature it is to shine.” But according to fact, the true Light is at the same time also the opposite “to false lights and *ignes fatui*, which lead people into harm and danger.” Calvin and others refer the words, “which lighteth every man,” to the “universal light of nature.” But it has been already shown that the Light in John never means the light of reason, or in-

tellectual illumination, but is the designation of salvation and the Saviour ; and that John represents this salvation as dawning only with the advent of Christ. How, then, can it be said of Christ as the Light, that He lighteth every man, in face of the fact, that the darkness did not comprehend the Light, ver. 5, and that He came to His own, and His own received Him not ? The answer to this question, which would certainly be difficult for a believer in predestination, is this, that  $\phi\omega\tau/\zeta\epsilon i$  has reference to the idea and definition, and that the words declare that no one has light who has not received it from Him ; every one receives light, who does not by his own fault exclude himself from it ; that the words therefore designate the greatness of the gift of Christ, which does not lose its importance because ingratitude despises it. Luther says : “ I preach to you all here at Wittenberg ; but how many are there among you who will be better for my preaching, and will receive the blessed Light with faith, that they may be enlightened by it ? Truly the lesser part believe my preaching. Still, I am and remain the teacher and preacher of you all. So, though all do not indeed believe the preaching of Christ, this does not take away His office. He is and remains equally the Light which lighteth all men. He is the true Light from the beginning to the end of the world ; that is, whatever men have come or shall yet come into the world and be enlightened, they have had, and shall still have, no other Light or Saviour than Christ. In fine, the Evangelist will allow no other means by which people can be enlightened and blest ; all the world is to have this light alone, or to remain eternally in darkness.” The words point first to Isa. xlii. 6, xlix. 6, “ I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles.” Acts iv. 12 corresponds in substance, “ Neither is there salvation in any other.” Luther translated, in his *first* edition, “ That was the true Light which lighteth all men, by His coming into the world.” But in the later editions he followed the Vulgate, “ That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” Against this rendering, it has been repeatedly remarked that the phrase, “ come into the world,” occurs indeed in rabbinical usage, but never in the New Testament, of common men who are born into their earthly existence ; but, on the other hand, is used frequently, and especially by our Evangelist, of the advent of Christ into the world, and

is set apart and consecrated to this use.<sup>1</sup> A second reason is, that ἐρχόμενον must be referred to φῶς, because otherwise ἦν, in ver. 10, does not receive its necessary complement from ver. 9 : He was, in consequence of His coming.

Ver. 10. “He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.”—The words, “He was in the world,” resume the contents of the previous verse, which tells us of the coming of the Light, the Saviour, into the world : so then He was in the world. Before the special scene of the Saviour’s advent, the covenant people, the Evangelist places the general scene, the world ; because, even on account of the creation by Him, Christ had a right, in whatever part of the world He might appear, to be joyfully welcomed : how should not creatures meet their Creator with rejoicing, when He comes to redeem them ! The Jews, in rejecting Christ, not only refused redeeming grace, but showed themselves ungrateful towards creating grace, as every man still does who despises Christ. According to many expositors, the words, “He was in the world,” refer to the time before the incarnation. “The Evangelist adds this,” says Bengel, “that no one may so understand the coming mentioned in the verse preceding, as though the Light had not been previously in the world.” But we have already shown that this—viz., that the Light was *not* in the world before the advent of Christ—is, in fact, the conception of the Evangelist ; after it has been said just before, that the Light has come into the world, it cannot be said without further explanation, that it was already in the world,—then there must in some way be designated the difference of the being in the world before the coming, from the later being in the world : in any case, however, the words, *already before*, which all expositors insert, would necessarily have been expressed in the text. Finally, the λόγος was, according to ver. 1, with God before his advent in the flesh. Even in the previous verse, the coming into the world forms the antithesis to being with God. That κόσμος here is the sublunary world, the abode of men, is clear from the last clause. On this the Logos could certainly operate, while still being with God ; but the Evangelist could

<sup>1</sup> Bengel: Apud Hebræos frequens est periphrasis hominis **הַבָּא בְּעוֹלָם** veniens in mundum ; sed in N. T. et præcipue in hoc libro id de solo Christo dicitur, sublimi significatu. *Erat enim, ante etiam quam veniret.*

not attribute to Him an existence in the world previous to the incarnation, without being false to his fundamental conception. On the words, “and the world was made by Him,” Luther remarks: “Because the Scripture ascribes the same title and divine almighty power to Christ our Lord, the Virgin’s natural Son, and that the world was made by Him, it follows unquestionably, that He is real very God and Creator of all things, and that therefore two natures, divine and human, are inseparably united in one Person, even in Christ.”

Ver. 11. “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.”—This is the second contrast. It is disgraceful when the world despises its Creator; still more disgraceful when the people of the covenant despise their covenant Lord, who for so long a time has faithfully cared for them, to whom He has vowed and sworn love and fidelity. Luther says: “As Moses calls the Jews God’s possession, so the Evangelist here calls them our Lord Christ’s possession, thereby to show, that Christ is very God, equal with the Father.” Τὰ ἰδία signifies what is any one’s own. Thus it stands of the home, which is one’s own, in John xix. 27; Acts xxi. 6. The LXX. uses τὰ ἰδία for בֵּיתוֹ, in Esther v. 10, vi. 12. The Israelites appear, throughout the Old Testament, as the possession or inheritance of Jehovah. Cf. *ex. gr.* Ex. xix. 5, “Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people.” Deut. vii. 6, “For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself above all people that are on the face of the earth.” Ps. cxxxv. 4, “For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto Himself, and Israel for His peculiar treasure.” Ex. iv. 22, 23; 2 Sam. vii. 24. The Old Testament connection between these passages and our text, where Israel suddenly appears as the possession of Christ, is formed by the doctrine of the Angel of the Lord, the God-equal Revealer of God. The latter appears as the Lord and possessor of Israel in Ex. iii. 2, 7. The temple, according to Mal. iii. 1, belongs to the Lord, and to His covenant Angel. We are led to the conclusion, that in Jesus the Jehovah of the Old Testament is represented, by the whole teaching of the Evangelist concerning the Logos, who is no other than the Old Testament Angel of the Lord; and by the passages, xii. 41, viii.

56. Cf. my Christology, i. p. 46 sq. The other apostles also transfer to Christ, without further remark, whatever is said of Jehovah in the Old Testament: Christology, p. 65 sq. That Christ was sent first to the covenant people, He Himself bears witness in Matt. xv. 24: *οὐκ ἀπεστάλη εἰ μὴ εἰς τὰ πρόβατα τὰ ἀπολωλότα οἴκου Ἰσραήλ.* A paraphrase of our text is given by John himself in xii. 37: "But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him."

The offence, which the fact of the unbelief of the covenant people might afford, the Evangelist counteracts in vers. 12, 13, by the glorious legitimation which Christ possesses in the noble gifts which He has imparted to believers in Him. If He has raised them to the highest of all dignities, that of sons of God, then here certainly the words of Deut. xxxii. 5 (margin) hold good: "[They are not] His children, that is their blot, a perverse and crooked generation."

Ver. 12. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in His name."—The exact meaning is: as many as *took* Him. The taking, says the Berleb. Bibel, would never have come to pass, unless Christ had given Himself. *Faith* is designated as the medium of the taking, and this *faith* is in the name of Christ. The name of one is in Scripture the totality of his deeds. That Christ has a name, indicates that He, like the Jehovah of the Old Testament, in distinction from the nameless gods of the heathen, has not come with empty pretensions, but has made known His nature in deeds of power and love, and has in this way erected a banner, around which His Church may rally. Wherever in the Old Testament the sonship of God is spoken of, the intimateness only of the relation of love is taken into view: the abridged comparison which finds place in all such passages, is extended in Ps. ciii. 13, "Like as a father pitith his children, so the *LORD* pitith them that fear Him." If Israel, for example, is called the son of God, this means, that God loves him as heartily as a father does his child. Here, on the other hand, the conception of sonship rests on the spiritual generation, in which God, by an immediate operation, renders men conceived and born in sin partakers of the divine life. Of such a sonship the Old Testament knows nothing.

Cf. my Comm. on Ps. ii. 7. The profound importance of this gift imparted through Christ, is indicated by the words, “to them gave He *power* to become the sons of God.” Power over a thing is the capability of obtaining possession of it. So in Rev. xxii. 14, “Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right (power) over the tree of life.” The power over the tree of life is the capability of obtaining possession of it. In Rev. ii. 26, power over the heathen signifies that one may freely rule over them. *Here* power forms the antithesis to the absolute weakness and incapability of the man who lives out of Christ to attain to the sonship of God. If we rightly reflected what there is in this “high honour, this unspeakable dignity and greatness” conferred on us by Christ, we should, as Luther says, “not trouble ourselves much about that which the world alone esteems high and great, much less strive thereafter.”

Ver. 13. “Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”—The proper antithesis is that between man and God: the preceding words, “of blood, nor of the will of the flesh,” refer to how little man has of himself; how wretched he is, who has no other birth than that effected by the help of man; how necessary the birth from God; how glorious the beneficence of Christ, who alone can procure us this birth. Where man is regarded as flesh and blood, which play so preponderant a part in the work of generation since the Fall (Lücke: “Blood, according to the view of the ancients, was the element and seat of the bodily life, and therefore of propagation), it is usually in a derogatory sense. So, e.g., in Matt. xvi. 17, “Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father, which is in heaven.” 1 Cor. xv. 50; Eph. vi. 12; Gal. i. 16; from which passages ours should not be separated. It is the same contrast which our Lord institutes between those who are born of flesh, and therefore are flesh, and those which are born of the Spirit. According to a widely extended supposition, the Evangelist is here putting to shame the pride of the Jews in their descent from Abraham, by opposing to their pretended nobility of birth, the real nobility of birth from God. “Hence,” says Luther, “John the Baptist punishes them severely for such pride in boasting that they were

Abraham's seed, and says, Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father." But nothing indicates such a reference; and the parallelism with ch. iii. is against it. The antithesis is simply that of the natural birth and the spiritual. Only the latter gives to life its true value. Man, created for God, is only then in his right element when he has become partaker of the Divine nature; and such a participation cannot proceed from natural generation, since by the Fall the flesh and blood in man have been brought into the foreground: that which comes of flesh and blood is flesh and blood, incapable of the higher life, or of true communion with God.

That in ver. 14 we have before us a new proposition, the proper acme of the Prologue, is clear from the fact, that here the Logos of the beginning returns. To the fullest expression of the mystery of the advent of Christ in the flesh, is added in vers. 15-18 the most sublime statement of the honours of Christ, and of the glorious gifts and graces which have been conferred through Him on the human race.

Ver. 14. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."

"And the Word was made flesh."—The *and* prefixed indicates that we have here no absolutely new beginning, but only the completion of that already begun, the definitive following the preparatory disclosures. "Flesh," remarks Luther, "means in the Scriptures the whole man, as below, in iii. 6, it is said, What is born of the flesh is flesh; but body and soul are born of a woman, not a dead lump of flesh, but a living child, which has flesh and blood." In what immediately precedes our text, flesh and blood are considered not as a single part of man, but the whole man is thus designated, because since the Fall these elements in man have come into the foreground. In John xvii. 2, "As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh," all flesh means all that man is. In the Old Testament also, *flesh* stands very frequently for the whole man. A soul is attributed to the flesh in Lev. xvii. 11; Deut. xii. 15; a spirit, in Job xii. 10 (margin). The New Testament views Jesus only as a complete man. Cf. John viii. 40. As such, He frequently designates Himself the Son of man. He is especially set before us as a complete man by the resurrection of Lazarus, in chap. xi.

But why does John say, The Word was made *flesh*, instead of, The Word was made *man*? The answer is furnished us by the passages of the Old Testament where, as here, there is an antithesis between flesh and God. In all such passages *flesh* has connected with it the idea of fallibility and weakness.<sup>1</sup> So, e.g., in Ps. lvi. 4, “In God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.” The Psalmist—it was remarked on this passage—calls man *flesh* in contempt, because where there is corporeity, there is no true strength. Jo. Arnd says, “He places in contrast to each other the strong God and feeble flesh, which is as grass and as the flower of the field.” In Ps. lxxviii. 39, it is said, “For He remembered that they were flesh, a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.” In Isa. xxxi. 3, “Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit.” In Isa. xl. 6–8, “All flesh (all mankind) is grass, and all the goodness thereof as the flower of the field, etc.,—but the Word of our God shall stand for ever.” This passage is especially connected with our text, since here also occurs the opposition between the flesh and the Word of God, which there indeed is impersonal, but here personal. This hitherto rude and absolute opposition has been reduced by the incarnation. From all this there can be no doubt that man is here designated as flesh to call attention to the depth of condescension in the Logos—His inexpressible goodness in so descending to our wretchedness, and in taking upon and into Himself our wretchedness, in order to render us partakers of His glory. “In our pauper flesh and blood clothes Himself the eternal Good.” This is the strongest of all motives to grateful self-consecration. That the expression *flesh* has this meaning, has been at all times recognised by the best expositors. Luther, e.g., says, “The Evangelist might have said, The Word was made man; but he does say, according to Scripture usage, He became flesh, to indicate weakness and mortality.” Calvin: Cum autem tanta sit distantia inter spiritualem Sermonis Dei gloriam et putidas carnis nostræ sordes, eousque tamen se Filius Dei submisit, ut carnem istam tot miseriis obnoxiam susciperet. The Berleb. Bibel: “The so sublimely described and majestic Word became miserable despised Flesh from pitying love.” There is a fulness of consolation in this

<sup>1</sup> Gesenius on בָּשָׂר: Sæpissime opponitur numini vique divinæ et adjunctam habet debilitatis et fragilitatis notionem.

fact, a balsam for the poor, terrified conscience. He who has done and undertaken so much for man, cannot reject the penitent sinner.<sup>1</sup>

“And dwelt among us.”—This is properly, And tabernacled among us. The word *σκηνώω*, occurring in the New Testament only in John,—here, and four times in the Apocalypse, vii. 15, *σκηνώσει ἐπ' αὐτούς*, xii. 12, xiii. 6, xxi. 3, *καὶ σκηνώσει μετ' αὐτῶν*,—means properly to tabernacle, and stands for the Heb. **לָנוּ**, in the LXX. Gen. xiii. 12, *ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν Σοδόμοις*. The strangeness of the expression would lead us to suppose that the Evangelist had some special ground for using it here. This lies in the allusion to the Heb. **לָנוּ**; and this allusion has deep practical significance, indicating that certain passages of the Old Testament, in which this word occurs, stand in a deeper practical connection with the present fact. It is said in Ex. xxv. 8, “And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may *dwell* among them;” in xxix. 45, “And I will *dwell* among the children of Israel, and will be their God; in ver. 46, “That brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them.” (Cf. Ps. lxxiv. 2, “This mount Zion, wherein Thou hast dwelt.”) This dwelling of God among His people, which is necessarily included in the conception of the people of God, attained its full truth only in Christ,—the former dwelling in the temple being only a typical one. It is coincident with the allusion to the passages in Genesis and Exodus,

<sup>1</sup> We add another extract from the excellent remarks of Luther on the words: And the Word was made flesh. “Here the Word receives another name. Above He was called God, and a Light which has come into the world, which has created the world, and which was not received by the world. Here He becomes flesh,—so condescends as to take upon Him my flesh and blood, my body and soul, and becomes not an angel, or some other glorious creature, but a man. This is a too great and exceeding treasure and grace which God has exercised towards the poor human race; it is impossible for a human heart either to comprehend or to conceive, still less to express it. Therefore we Christians should at least accustom ourselves to set much by these words, which, even under the Papacy, remain and are preserved in honour. This Word has been sung daily in every mass; and this elegantly, with slower and more special notes than the other words; for when they have sung, Ex Maria virgine, et homo factus est, every one has bowed the knee and taken off his cap. And it were proper and right that we should kneel before the words, Et homo factus est, and sing them with slow notes, and should hear with joyful hearts that the Divine Majesty has so conde-

that in John ii. 21 Jesus appears as the substance, of which the temple was the foreshadowing type. That *σκηνώ* is copied from *שׁבָּה* can be the less doubted, since Aquila, in Ex. xxiv. 16, "And the glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai," for a like reason renders *שׁבָּה* by ἐσκήνωσε; since Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion have *σκηνώσω* in Ex. xxv. 8; and since the temple in Ezra i. 50 (ii. 68 ?), on account of the indwelling of God, the Shekinah, and in allusion to this word, is called *σκηνώμα Θεοῦ*. As the words, "I will dwell among the children of Israel," point forwards to our text, "and dwelt among us," so this again contains the germ and warrant of the words, "He shall dwell among them," Rev. vii. 15, and "He will dwell with them," in Rev. xxi. 3. That the Word has dwelt with us in this troubled world, is our guaranty that once in the heavenly blessedness, and finally in the kingdom of glory on the transfigured earth, He will dwell among His people. "In the New Jerusalem," it was remarked on Rev. xxi. 3, "the presence of God among His people proves itself so glorious, as to put everything previous in the shade. The words, He will dwell with them, have regard to the words, He dwelt among us, John i. 14. The latter declaration is the secure foundation for the former." The Berleburger Bibel says, "The thing itself points us back to all that occurs in the Old Testament of a dwelling-place, and stretches forward to the last times, when that will be accomplished in the members of Christ, for which He became man. Rev. xxi. 3."

scended as to become like us poor mortals, and should thank God for His unspeakable grace and mercy, in that the Godhead Himself has become flesh. For who can sufficiently speak of this? It would not even be a wonder if we were to weep for joy. Yes, if even I should never be saved (which God forbid), it shall yet make me joyful that Christ, of my flesh, bone, and soul, sits in heaven at the right hand of God; to such honour have come my bone, flesh, and blood. I have read of instances when one who has had no rest because of the devil has signed himself with the cross, and said, The Word was made flesh; or, which is to say as much, I am a Christian. Thus the devil has been driven away and beaten. There is a story, or legend, that the devil once upon a time, when the Gospel of John was being read from the beginning, In principio erat verbum, stood and listened unmoved to the word, And the Word was made flesh; but then he vanished. This may have been invented, or it may have happened; yet it is the truth, that he who speaks and regards these words with true faith in his heart, him the devil must certainly flee."

“And we beheld His glory.”—The Apostle speaks in the plural, because he wishes to designate not only his own personal experiences, but those of the entire Church, in so far as it consisted of “eye-witnesses of the Word,” Luke i. 2. A similar use of the plural is found in John xxi. 24, and 1 John i. 1. Luther remarks, “This His teaching, preaching, miracles, and marvellous deeds have shown us; so that, whoever was not blinded and hardened by the devil, as were the high priests and scribes, could perceive that He was by nature God; as He Himself proves by His words and deeds, in restoring the sick, and calling to life the dead, and, in fine, in performing so great and so many signs and wonders, as would be impossible for any other man.” Here, again, there is a significant resemblance to the Old Testament,—one of those fine “hints” in which the Gospel of John, in harmony with the Apocalypse, is so rich. Isaiah says, in chap. xl. 5, in the announcement of the Messianic times, “And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together;” and in lxvi. 18, “It shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see My glory.” LXX.: *καὶ ἥξουσι καὶ ὄψονται τὴν δόξαν μου.* “The glory of the Lord which the heathen shall behold, is His glorious revelation and presence, which, hitherto concealed, is now unveiled.” Cf. also lx. 2: “But the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee.” The allusion to these passages rests on the intuition, that in Christ has appeared the Jehovah of the Old Covenant,—an intuition which the Apostle immediately afterwards expresses openly, in designating Christ as the only-begotten Son of God.

“The glory as of the only-begotten of the Father.”—The Berleb. Bibel says, “It was such as is conformable to so sublime a Person, and so sublime an office.” Ως compares the reality with the idea, the experienced with what was to be expected. *Μονογενής* is the only-begotten in the sense of only Son. It occurs in the New Testament elsewhere, only of the only child of earthly parents: of Christ, only in John here, in iii. 16, 18, 1 John iv. 9. The ground of this usage is probably to be found in Zech. xii. 10, where Christ is not indeed directly called an only-begotten, but is yet compared with one: “And they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for the only [son]; and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness

for the first-born.”<sup>1</sup> Christ being designated as the only-begotten, after that, shortly before, the dignity of all believers is placed in this, that they are sons of God, He must be the Son of God in a very special, only sense,—not by grace, but by nature; so that His sonship does not lie in a line with that of believers, but is its ground and condition. Luther says: “This is the first time that John calls the Word the only-begotten Son of the Father. In this thou hearest clearly and distinctly that the Word which was from everlasting with the Father, and is the light of men, is called the Son, yea, the only-begotten Son of God. . . . God has many other sons and children, but only One is the only-begotten, of whom it is said, that all was made by Him: the other sons are not the Word, by which all things were made; but they were created by this only-begotten Son, who, like the Father, is the Creator of heaven and earth. The others all become sons by this only-begotten Son, who is our Lord and God, and we are called many-begotten sons: but this is alone the only-begotten Son, whom He has begotten in the Godhead from everlasting. So now the Word by which all things are created and preserved, has become flesh, that is, man. And by this, that He has become man, and yet was the Lord of glory from everlasting, we poor men, who believe in His name, become sons of God, and God becomes our Father; but He is alone the only-begotten Son, as St Paul says, by whom God forms, rules, and makes all things. He is far above all *adopted* children. He has His own special glory from the Father.” The only-begotten of the Father, is the only-begotten who comes from the Father.

“Full of grace and truth.”—The expositors for the most part join these words to the beginning of the verse. But the assumption that the words *καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα—πατρός* are a parenthesis, is manifestly an unfounded one. They have an independent meaning as much as the other contents of the verse, and acquire especial significance by the reference to Isa. xl. 5. The nominative *πλήρης* does not require the assumption of a parenthesis. We have an abridged relative sentence; “(which is) full:” Buttmann, S. 68. The Apocalypse furnishes a large

<sup>1</sup> Even Lampe says: Nomen unigeniti a nullo Scriptore Servatori datur, nisi a sole Joanne, idque saepius. Apud Græcos interpres ponitur pro יְהִי sub quo nomine Messias exprimitur. Zach. xii. 10.

number of such constructions (*e.g.*, i. 5); and the Prologue is, for obvious reasons, that part of the Gospel which is most closely connected in style with the Apocalypse. We have here again a noteworthy reference to the Old Testament. In Ex. xxxiv. 6, it is said, in the fundamental definition of the essence of Jehovah, which Moses receives from Jehovah Himself: Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth—*רַב חֶסֶד וְאֶמֶת;* the LXX. πολυνέλεος καὶ ἀληθινός. Knobel renders: “great in love and *faithfulness.*” This, however, is not *אמת*, but *אמונה*. *Truth* is more comprehensive than *fidelity*. The words, “abundant in truth,” declare that in God there is no mere seeming; that He is entirely what He is; as it were, thoroughly God; therefore, is never behind the expectations which His own cherish of Him,—gives no promises which He does not keep, awakes no hopes which He does not satisfy, never forsakes His own in times of difficulty. Here, also, that is transferred to Christ, without further explanation, which in the Old Testament is declared of Jehovah, from the intuition expressed in ver. 18, that every revelation of the Father is through the medium of the Son; therefore, that the self-revealing Jehovah of the Old Covenant must be identical with Christ. It might be supposed that Micah vii. 20 also is to be viewed as an original passage, together with Ex. xxxiv. 6, “Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which Thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.” But the truth is, our text refers only to Ex. xxxiv, and ver. 17 to Micah. Here mercy and truth appear to be the property of the Person; but, on the other hand, in ver. 17, as in Micah, the *gift* which He bestows. As Christ is here designated as rich in truth, and as He calls Himself the Truth in xiv. 6, so He appears in the Apocalypse, iii. 7, xix. 11, as the True. This is a designation which raises Him far above the stage of humanity, and presupposes omnipotence and true divinity. All that is created is lacking in truth, and is affected by the difference between being and seeming, between word and deed, between belief and reality. He who in the world of the seeming has a longing after the true existence, finds satisfaction only when he lifts his heart to the Father and the Son, who have the fulness of truth in common.

Ver. 15. “John bare witness of Him, and cried, saying,

This was He of whom I spoke, He that cometh after me is preferred before me ; for He was before me.”—The thought is the pre-mundane existence of Christ, His superhuman nature and dignity. That the testimony of John is subordinate, is shown by the manner in which the Evangelist, in ver. 16, connects his own train of thought with the declaration of the Baptist. The declaration, that Christ is unconditionally exalted above the humanity, whose highest bearer is John, stands very suitably between the words, “full of grace and truth,” and, “and of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.” The same declaration of John the Baptist, which is here applied in the connection of the Prologue, recurs in ver. 30, in the historical connection. From this we perceive, that it was made at the baptism of Christ, at which the Baptist received the divine certainty that Jesus was the Messiah, for whose advent he had prepared the way without knowing Him. *Μαρτυρέω* occurs some thirty times in the Gospel of John,—in the Gospel and the Epistles, more frequently than in all the other writings of the New Testament together. The verb is not found in the Apocalypse. The noun *μαρτυρία*, however, is a bond of connection between all the writings of John. The present tense stands here, because the ever valid testimony of John may be given as in the present. The perfect *κέκραγε* designates the historical sphere, in which this testimony was first given. John *cried*: the loud voice is the outward representation of confidence and decision ; indecision has a low voice. Cf. xi. 43 ; Rev. vii. 2. John has said previously, before the baptism of Christ, and before he knew Him with divine certainty as the Messiah, “He who cometh after me, was before me.” After he had seen Christ, and had received the Divine revelation that it was He, he says : *This* is He of whom I said, etc. ; for He was before me ;” so that *πρῶτός μον ἦν* should be separated by a *colon* from the preceding words. “He was before me,” is covered in substance by “He is preferred before me,” and cannot therefore be considered as a part of the earlier speech of John. Christ, who now stands bodily before him, was, according to the testimony received from God, earlier than John, and this forms the ground of his identity with Him who was previously designated by John. The correctness of this view, which obviates the unpleasant necessity of subtilizing on the words *ἐμπροσθέν*

*μου γέγονεν*, is favoured by the fact, that in ver. 27, where the earlier utterance of the Baptist is quoted, to which he here refers (*δὸν εἰπον*), the words *ὅτι πρῶτός μου ἦν* are wanting, and are found only in ver. 30, where the declaration of John at the baptism of Christ is quoted.—The words, “He that cometh after me is preferred before me,” rest on Mal. iii. 1, “Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me.” On the one hand is the messenger, John, the forerunner of the Messiah; but on the other, the Messiah, as the predecessor of the messenger: for He it is who sends him, and causes His way to be prepared by him. The phrase, *ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν*, is referred by many expositors to dignity. But *ἔμπροσθεν*, so frequent in the New Testament, never occurs of a precedence in dignity; and no ground is afforded for this interpretation, either by Gen. xlvi. 20, or by the parallel passages from classic authors adduced by Lücke, after the example of Lampe. Moreover, besides the usage of the language, the reference to Mal. iii. 1 is decisive against this interpretation. When the Baptist, on the basis of a profounder exposition of this passage, refers the *ἔμπροσθεν*, which in one place is applied to *him*, and in the other is assigned by him to Christ, to the Messiah (cf. Matt. xi. 10; Luke vii. 27, where also the declaration of Malachi is repeated: *ἴδον, ἐγώ ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου, ὃς κατασκεύασει τὴν ὁδόν σου ἔμπροσθέν σου*), the point of this reference would be lost, if *ἔμπροσθεν* were not used in the same meaning as in the prophecy. But that in this it is not a precedence in dignity which is spoken of, is manifest. Others interpret: “has been before me;” *γίνομαι* with the meaning of *to be*, as in Luke i. 5; 2 Pet. ii. 1. As to sense, this interpretation is correct. Even against this, however, there arise etymological considerations. *Ἔμπροσθεν* does indeed occur in the Apocrypha frequently as an adverb and preposition with the genitive—of time, e.g., *ἔμπροσθεν ἐτῶν πλειόνων*, Esdr. vi. 14. In the New Testament, however, it occurs always of place, as Bengel has already pointed out. And if this reason is not fully decisive, it is strengthened by the fact, that even in the original passage, *ἔντοτε, ἔμπροσθέν μου*, stands in the local sense, designating the Baptist as the *fore-runner* of Christ. Accordingly, we must also render our text, “has preceded me,”—the relation of time

being, as is so frequently the case, presented in the form of the relation of space. It does not appear that *πρῶτος* stands for *πρότερος*, as is usually assumed (Buttmann 74). Much rather is designated the absolute priority which Christ has in relation to John. It seems evident that the sense would be a feeble one, if *πρότερος* stood here instead of *πρῶτος*.

Ver. 16. “And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.”—Instead of *καὶ* is found *ὅτι* in important critical authorities. But the *ὅτι* before and after has doubtless attracted that in the middle. The assumption, that ver. 15 is a parenthesis, is harsh; and the *ὅτι* could not be suitably referred to ver. 15. But, on the other hand, the *and* is quite in place. After the Evangelist has quoted what John testified of Christ, he adds what the Saviour has procured, and is, in the experience of all believers; after he has designated Him by the words of the Baptist, as exalted above all men, he relates how this exaltation is proved in this, that His fulness, like that of God (Ps. lxxv. 10), suffices for all who will take of it. In *ἐλάβομεν*, the Evangelist speaks, as in xxi. 24, in the name of all believers. After *καὶ χάριν*, we must supply *ἐλάβομεν*. That grace is received *instead of* grace, indicates that a new grace always comes in the place of the old one; that Christ is not rich once or occasionally for His people, and then allows them to hunger and suffer want again, but that they shall constantly drink anew of the good things of His house. It is parallel with “grace for grace,” when the praise is given to the Jehovah of the Old Covenant, that He is constantly giving to His people occasion to sing a new song, in consequence of a new work, a new revelation of His glory. It is a mistake to interpret here of the evangelical grace of the New Testament, which has succeeded the grace of the law under the Old Covenant. The expositions of Augustine—The grace of life for the grace of faith, and of Bernard—The grace of glory for the grace of the Church militant (*gratiam gloriæ pro gratia militiæ*), are too restricted, but are quite suitable, as a part or sample of the whole. In the transition from existence here to that beyond, which leads through the valley of the shadow of death, these words, “grace for grace,” prove especially glorious. It is a happy exchange of the one grace of preservation in the journey through the wilderness of life, for the other, when the believer

stands before the throne of God, and serves Him day and night in His temple, where no sun shall smite him, nor any heat, but the Lamb shall lead him, and guide him by living waters. Cf. 1 John iii. 2, ἀγαπητοὶ, νῦν τέκνοι Θεοῦ ἐσμεν, καὶ οὐπώ ἐφανερώθη τέ ἐσόμεθα, οἶδαμεν δὲ ὅτι ἐὰν φανερωθῇ, ὅμοιοι αὐτῷ ἐσόμεθα, ὅτι ὀψόμεθα αὐτὸν καθὼς ἐστι. That also is grace for grace, when in this earthly life we receive, instead of refreshing grace (Ps. xxiii. 3), the grace of the cross, in more efficient preparation for the grace of glory.

Ver. 17. “For the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”—Even the giving of the law was accompanied by operations of grace, partly in order to render possible its fulfilment, partly to reward obedience. Even for the Old Testament it was no empty title, when God is designated in Ex. xxxiv. 6 as “abundant in goodness.” The prophet, in Isa. lxiii. 7, extols the Lord for His great goodness towards Israel during the whole course of history. How could the praise of the law, as sweeter than honey and the honey-comb, etc., in Ps. xix., be explained, if law and grace form an absolute antithesis? But in comparison with the grace which has come by Christ, that prevalent under the Old Covenant disappears so completely, that the Evangelist may ignore it, and represent the antithesis, relative in itself, as absolute, just as in the preceding verses light is represented as coming first into the world with the advent of Christ. In general, the law is given to men as a schoolmaster to Christ, Gal. iii. 24—to make them feel their misery and need of redemption; but grace is offered to those, who have thus become weary and heavy laden, first by Christ. Such an opposition of the Old and New Covenants, of the law and Gospel, was already intimated by prophecy in Jer. xxxi. 31–40. Cf. Christology, 2, p. 432. It was there remarked, among other things, “Since the New Covenant is not to be like the former, the advantages of the New must be so many deficiencies of the Old. Now, these advantages are all purely spiritual: first, forgiveness of sins; then, the writing of the law in the heart.” Luther says: “Thus John drives us from confidence and comfort in our own works and merit, and leads us to the grace of Christ and the love of God, not alone here in this text, but through his whole Gospel and Epistles. As if he would say: ‘What does God regard? what moves

Him to be favourable to you, to remit sins? Does He do it for the sake of your sacrifices, circumcision, or the worship which you perform in His temple? No, it is something other than this which God regards. He is gracious and merciful for the sake of this unspeakable grace of His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, because Christ is in perfect grace before God: this same grace we enjoy, and are therefore acceptable to God for the Lord Christ's sake; He becomes gracious to us, for the sake of His beloved Son.' Eph. i. 7.—It is grace, that God is gracious and merciful to us, and shows Himself gracious, for the sake of the Lord Christ, and forgives all sins—will not reckon them unto eternal death. As if He would say, The law is indeed a law of life, justice, and all good, as given by Moses; but by Christ something more has happened: He comes and fills the empty bag and empty hand, and brings what the law instructs and requires of us. If we could have kept the law, grace would not have been necessary for us to receive grace for grace." In these remarks of Luther grace is referred too exclusively to the forgiveness of sins—certainly the fundamental benefit—instead of to the fulness of gifts and graces, of which we have become partakers through the beneficence of Christ.—With grace is connected truth. Lücke remarks, "By this is attributed to the law not untruth, *ψεῦδος*, but imperfection in the revelation of the truth." But it is not this that is treated of. The truth is wanting to the law, because grace is; this is the true gift. The law is untrue, when complete satisfaction of religious need is sought in it. No blame, however, attaches to the law on this account. It is not according to the purpose of God to afford such absolute satisfaction. It is not the end of the ways of God with His people, but the beginning. It is not to quicken, but to render weary and heavy laden. "The law," says the Berleburger Bibel, "must precede, and as a schoolmaster to Christ, Gal. iii. 24, like John prepare the way." It is not yet the revelation of truth in the sphere of religion—he who has merely the law, since he possesses not grace, also possesses not that which is truly satisfying, that is adequate to the idea—but it is the necessary condition of the revelation of the truth.—It is of purpose that the name Jesus Christ meets us at the end of the Prologue. The Berleb. Bibel: "Now, the principal person of the New Testament must be named as Moses is

named. Hitherto this name has been reserved.”<sup>1</sup> With the words, “the law came by Moses,” is to be compared Deut. xxxiii. 4, “Moses commanded us a law,” and with “grace and truth came by Jesus Christ,” Micah vii. 20, and the concluding words of ver. 14.

Ver. 18. “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.”—Between vers. 17 and 18, as there is no connecting particle, so there is also no closer dependence. The gift of Christ is presented from another side. Luther: “Therefore all stands entirely on the Son: no man even knows anything of God, but such as is revealed to him by the Son, who fully knows the Father’s heart, that the whole world may be brought under the Lord Christ, and be subject to Him; for without Him no one can be saved.” He who is without Christ is excluded from the knowledge of God, and thus from the source of all salvation and blessedness. This is a proposition which is testified to not less loudly by experience, than by the word of God. Christ, by His personal advent and His revelation in the word, has brought nigh the being of God, and thus rendered a connection with Him possible. He who will go to God, let him turn to Christ; for he who sees Him, sees the Father.—It is a question whether the proposition, “No man has seen God at any time,” is to be united with passages like Gen. xvi. 13, “And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, The visible God;” xxxii. 30, “And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel; for I have seen God face to face, and my life [soul] is preserved;” Ex. xxiv. 10, according to which the elders of the people “saw the God of Israel;” Num. xii. 8, where Moses beholds the similitude of God. The assertion, that these passages are to be explained and limited by Ex. xxxiii., where, in harmony with our declaration, God is said to be invisible, is not to the point. For both there and here, it is not the absolute invisibility of God that is maintained, but only, that no man can bear the *full splendour* of the Divine glory. The prayer of Moses, “Show me Thy glory,” is heard

<sup>1</sup> Bengel: Johannes, facta semel mentione incarnationis, ver. 14, deinceps nunquam hoc significatu ponit nomen  $\lambda\delta\gamma\sigma$ , Verbum, toto hoc libro, cf. 1 Joh. i. 1, ubi item a nomine  $\lambda\delta\gamma\sigma$  incipit, in progressu Jesum Christum appellat.

only with a restriction. The correct answer is, that by the opposition to the Son, God is here more exactly distinguished as God the Father, who is expressly named in the parallel passages, vi. 46, οὐχ ὅτι τὸν πατέρα τις ἐώρακεν εἰ μὴ ὁ ὥν παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, οὗτος ἐώρακε τὸν πατέρα, and xiv. 6, οὐδεὶς ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, εἰ μὴ δι’ ἐμοῦ: as also in the declaration of Christ, Matt. xi. 27, πάντα μοι παρεδόθη ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς μου· καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐπιγινώσκει τὸν νιὸν, εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ, οὐδὲ τὸν πατέρα τις ἐπιγινώσκει, εἰ μὴ ὁ νιὸς, καὶ φέαν βούληται ὁ νιὸς ἀποκαλύψαι, is contained the doctrine of the unconditionally necessary mediation of every knowledge of God (the passage shows that by seeing is here designated, in an individualizing manner, the entire knowledge of God) by the Son. The Old Testament passages, however, do not refer to God the Father. Through the whole of the Old Testament runs the doctrine of the Angel of the Lord, whose mediation is to be understood, wherever God enters into relations to mortals, even when there is no express mention of it. For the passages which mention it distinctly rest on the conception, that there is a necessity in the nature of God, that He should not make Himself known without such mediation. In the two first of the passages quoted, we can specially prove that God was beheld through the mediation of His angel. In Gen. xvi. 7, it is previously said, “And the Angel of the Lord found her;” and according to Hos. xii., it was the Angel of the Lord who met Jacob in Peniel. Besides which, the “Invisible God,” 1 Tim. i. 17, has not a double mediator—under the Old Covenant the Angel of the Lord, under the New, the only-begotten Son, so that to the latter is imparted the honour of only partially declaring the being of God,—but in the Angel of the Lord is represented the Logos Himself, in the prelude to His incarnation. On this conception proceeds the Old Testament itself, when it announces in Zechariah and Malachi, that in the Messiah the Angel of the Lord would appear among His people. And John follows this conception, when in ver. 11 he says that the Messiah came to His own; and in xii. 41, that Isaiah saw Christ.—Since in the New Testament there are undeniable cases of the extinction of the difference between *εἰς* and *ἐν* (Buttmann 287), we are not to refine with respect to *εἰς τὸν κόλπον*: it is simply equivalent to *ἐν τοῖς κόλποις*, Luke xvi. 23; *ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ*, John xiii. 23. In human

relations, the intimacy of the relation is indicated by bodily nearness. In Deut. xiii. 6, xxviii. 56, Micah vii. 5, the wife or husband of one's bosom is spoken of, to denote the intimacy of the conjugal relation. The nursing father bears the suckling in his bosom, Num. xi. 12; Isa. xl. 11. Here the expression of such human relations is borrowed, to designate the intimateness of the relation of the Son to the Father: correspondent in substance to  $\pi\rho\delta\varsigma\tau\delta\nu\Theta\epsilon\sigma\nu$ , in ver. 1. Luther: "The Son lies in the bosom and arms of the Father, and is so near to Him, that He certainly knows what the Father has concluded in His heart." It is not said, which *was* in the bosom of the Father, but which *is* in the bosom of the Father. The closeness of the relation which is designated by the being in the bosom of the Father, was not disturbed by the incarnation. Against the assertion, that John had in mind the *exalted* Christ who has returned to the bosom of the Father, iii. 13 is decisive, where the Son of God in His *abasement* designates Himself as in heaven; as also the words, "I and My Father *are one*." So soon as we are really in earnest with respect to the divinity of Christ, it becomes a matter of course that the intimateness of His relation to God cannot have been essentially altered by the incarnation.

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## CHAPTER I. 19-II. 11.

The Prologue of the Gospel is followed by the general narrative, the conclusion of which, at the end of chap. xx., has repeatedly been taken for the conclusion of the whole, and then by the conclusion correspondent with the Prologue, in chap. xxi. The general narrative has two principal parts, the second beginning with xiii. 1. The whole of the general narrative falls into seven groups: the first part into four, the second into three. Of the four groups of the first part, the first, our section, contains the early ministrations of Jesus in Peræa and Galilee, in the order of the same prophecy which Matthew, in iv. 15, takes for his starting-point, by which he, the first Apostle among the Evangelists, following Mark and Luke, was appointed to make the activity of Christ in Galilee and Peræa, rather than the his-

tory of the Passion, the subject of his presentation, Isa. ix. 1, where the principal scene of Christ's ministrations is designated as “the way of the sea,” that is the general—“beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations,”—that is, the two parts of the whole. In view of this prophecy, John also takes his starting-point from this principal scene of the activity of Jesus. The localities of our section have a manifest regard to this prophecy. Compare i. 28, *ταῦτα ἐν Βηθαβαρᾳ ἐγένετο πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου*. Ver. 44, *τῇ ἐπαύριον ἡθέλησεν ἔξελθεῖν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν*. Chap. ii. 1, *καὶ τῇ ἡμέρῃ τῇ τρίτῃ γάμος ἐγένετο ἐν Κανᾷ τῆς Γαλιλαίας*. ii. 11, *ταύτην ἐποίησε τὴν ἀρχὴν τῶν σημείων ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐν Κανᾷ τῆς Γαλιλαίας*. Our section describes the events of a sacred seven of days: in i. 19–28, the testimony of John on the day before the baptism of Christ; in vers. 29–34, the testimony of the Baptist concerning Christ at His baptism; in vers. 35–42, the events of the third day, the third testimony of the Baptist, and the first conversions which followed it; in vers. 43–51, the events of the fourth day; in ii. 1–11, the close of the sacred week, the seventh day, hallowed by the beginning of signs, which Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee.

#### VERSES 19–34.

In harmony with the three first Gospels, which, before the account of the public appearance of Christ, speak of the preparatory agency of the Baptist, here also the narrative, which follows the Prologue, and continues to the end of chap. xx., begins with John the Baptist. A double testimony is quoted, which he bore to Christ. In the first, vers. 19–28, John points from himself to Christ before the baptism; in the second, vers. 29–34, he declares, not on his own authority, but on the ground of Divine revelation, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

It is entirely incorrect to ascribe to John in this section the purpose of refuting the opinion of the later disciples of John, that the Baptist himself was the Messiah. The pursuit of such trivial objects, any regard for such obscure after-growths, does not suit the lofty spirit of this Gospel. We learn the real object from the address of our Lord to the Jews, in ver. 33, “Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth,” even as the object of the account of the marriage at Cana, in

ii. 1-11, is fixed by the declaration of Christ immediately following this (v. 36), “ But I have greater witness than that of John : for the works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me.” The higher the position of John, the man who came in the spirit and power of Elijah, whose prophetic gift shone clearly, and gained for itself universal recognition, the more weighty was his testimony for Christ, which the more expressly indicated its origin from above, the deeper John abased himself to exalt Christ. To the Evangelist this testimony must have appeared the more significant, since he himself had been first pointed by it to Christ, since he himself had experienced in his heart the power of this testimony, and had by it been first led to recognise Christ as the Lamb of God. This definition of the object of the section is in harmony with the object of the whole Gospel, as set forth by the Evangelist himself in xx. 31, “ But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name.”

The view current at present is, that the baptism of Christ, which is not related by John, had taken place before the embassy of the Chief Council to the Baptist, of which we have the account in vers. 19-28. But this view we must decidedly reject. The testimony of John to Christ in vers. 19-28, which abstains from any more exact designation of the person of Christ, loses its distinction from that in vers. 29-34—which declares, In this man the Messiah presents Himself, whose advent I have before announced to you,—if we erroneously suppose that it was given before the baptism of Christ, and before the appearance of the Holy Spirit. The Baptist would not have performed his office of witness, if, after the baptism, he had spoken so indefinitely of Christ, without in any way indicating His person. This would be an unworthy game at hide and seek. Further, John, in vers. 19-28, still stands manifestly in the foreground, as was the case before the baptism of Christ. The mission of John, is then still the question with which all minds are occupied. There is significance also in the undeniable relationship of the declaration of John here in vers. 19-28, with that in Matt. iii. 11; Luke iii. 16. As to form, indeed, the utterances are different. The Baptist speaks here to the deputies of the Chief Council ; there, to the multitudes who came to his baptism, Luke

iii. 7, as it was very natural that the Baptist should variously repeat the simple contents of his message. But as to the matter, there is a striking resemblance, which especially makes itself known in this, that here, as there, the agency of the Messiah appears as a purely future one. This utterance of John, however, is set expressly in the time before the baptism. Finally, it can scarcely be subject to a doubt, that the coming of Jesus to the Baptist, which is spoken of in ver. 29 (*τῇ ἐπαύριον βλέπει τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐρχόμενον πρὸς αὐτὸν*), is no other than the coming of Jesus to the baptism, of which the other Evangelists speak; cf. especially Matt. iii. 13, *τότε παραγίνεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ τῆς Γαλιλαίας ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰορδάνην πρὸς τὸν Ἰωάννην τοῦ βαπτισθῆναι ὑπ' αὐτοῦ*: so that thus John, after his delicate manner of reference to his predecessors, whom he wishes to supplement, and especially to the first Apostle among the Evangelists, expressly indicates the passage where his narrative attaches itself to the earlier accounts. If we misapprehend this, there is not in John any object or result of the coming of Christ to the Baptist. A mere conversation is the less to be thought of, since none of the Evangelists say anything of an immediate intercourse of Christ with John—the only personal contact, and the only conversation which they mention, is that at the baptism—since also ver. 36 here shows that the two men of God did not seek, but avoided closer personal intercourse; which is explained by the fact, that the divine mission of the Baptist and the significance of his testimony came so much the more into light, the more his position was an isolated one.

Among the arguments which have been brought forward for the view now current, there is only one which can have much weight. Even Lampe insists that “John numbers the days which follow the manifestation of Christ in vers. 29–34, in such an uninterrupted series, that there is no space left for the fast and temptation, which the other Evangelists place immediately after the baptism.” And Lücke says, “If the different *ἐπαύριον* in chap. i., and ‘on the third day,’ in ii. 1, are taken strictly and referred to each other, it is impossible to find any place for the forty days’ temptation *after* i. 19 sq.” But the temptation of Christ finds a very suitable place in the time which Jesus spent with His disciples in the land of Judæa, iii. 22. It is much more intelligible, if Jesus had already made a

commencement with His signs, and with the manifestation of His glory. Chap. iv. 2 is parallel with the section, Matt. iv. 12 sq., which follows immediately on the narrative of the temptation. The *εὐθύς* of Mark, in i. 12, does not surely exclude the intervention of some time between the baptism and temptation of Christ, and of a series of events which are passed over by Mark, after the example of Matthew.

Excellently remarks Lampe: “God’s special providence shines forth in this, that immediately before Jesus was perceived by John as present, the magistrates of the Jews must themselves give occasion to the bearing of this witness, whereby a new way was prepared for the coming Jesus.” As regards the Baptist, it was for him the reward of the fidelity with which he “confessed and denied not,” that immediately thereupon it was granted him to behold the Saviour and to baptize Him, to receive the Divine testimony for Him, and to be entrusted with the promulgation of the same, to the everlasting preservation of his memory in the Church of God.

### VERSES 19–28.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN BEFORE THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST.

Ver. 19. “And this is the record of John.”—The commencement with *And* intimates that the general narrative stands in essential connection with the Prologue,—that both are only single parts of one inwardly united whole. Such a commencement was the more natural, since already, in the Prologue, John, and the witness which he bore to Christ, had been spoken of, vers. 15, 6–8. Yet the testimony *here* is not identical with that in ver. 15. Of the latter we have the account much rather in ver. 30: it is that given after the baptism, which applies to the Saviour as already appeared and made manifest. The testimony *here* was given “when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem, to ask him, Who art thou?” It is characteristic of John, that he employs with unusual frequency the designation *οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι*, by which he is distinguished from Matthew and his two successors. We learn from this, that John is writing at a distance from Palestine, and especially for believers from among the heathen; and

that then the separation of the Christian Church from the fellowship of the Jewish nation was already an accomplished fact. John also knows himself to be separated from the Jews, and regards them as a foreign body, in harmony with the Apocalypse, where the Jews, in ii. 9 and iii. 9, appear as the *συναγωγὴ τοῦ Σατανᾶ*, a community entirely uncongenial to the author. Moreover, in the Gospel, the name of Jews does not of itself designate “the party in opposition to the Son of God.” This assumption does not suit even our passage, since the embassy has here no intention whatever inimical to Christ. Still less in ii. 6, *κατὰ τὸν καθαρισμὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων*: ii. 13, *τὸ πάσχα τῶν Ἰουδαίων*: iii. 1, *ἀρχῶν τῶν Ἰουδαίων*: v. 1, *έօρτὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων*: vi. 4, viii. 31, where Jews are spoken of, who believed in Christ. The name is in itself indifferent. If it stands repeatedly where acts inimical to the Son of God are spoken of, this is to be explained by the fact, that the Jewish national spirit took more and more this direction. The Jews are *here* represented by the highest national court, the Chief Council. It cannot be doubted, that by the embassy to the Baptist, with which the message to Christ corresponds as to form, they complied with the duty and obligation of their office. Concerning the disposition from which the embassy proceeded, we have an authentic declaration in v. 33–35, where our Lord says to the Jews, “Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.—He was a burning and shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.” According to this, the Chief Council at that time regarded the appearance of the Baptist with pleasure. The higher the dignity he ascribed to himself, the dearer was he to them. They regarded his greatness as their own, the highness of his office as a pledge of the elevation of their people from the dust of abasement. The embassy proceeding from such a spirit, is a testimony that at that time the expectation, founded on the prophecies of Daniel, of the nearness of the Messianic kingdom, had seized upon the minds of the people. Otherwise they would not have gone on the presupposition that the Baptist must, or could be, either the Messiah, or one of His immediate predecessors. Moreover, the Chief Council desires, at first, only to know what the Baptist declares of himself. The further examination they reserve to themselves, and would not certainly have been too hasty in their

decision, whatever the answer of John had proved to be. The Jews sent from Jerusalem—the religious centre, the high watch-tower, from which all phenomena of religious life in the country were beheld and watched over—priests and Levites. Since all priests were at the same time Levites, it might be assumed that the priests and Levites were personally identical,—as much as to say, Levitic priests. The Old Testament mentions in a series of passages the Levitic priests; and for this the LXX. has in Josh. iii. 3, viii. 33; Isa. lxvi. 21, *ἱερεῖς καὶ Λευίτας*, which is perhaps to be explained by Deut. xxvii. 9, where the LXX. has *καὶ ἐλεύσῃ πρὸς τοὺς ἱερεῖς τοὺς Λευίτας*, and xviii. 1, *οὐκ ἔσται ἱερεῦσι τοῖς Λευίταις*. A mission of priests, and of Levites distinct from them, occurs also in 2 Chron. xvii. 7–9. Jehoshaphat, in the third year of his reign, sends out five princes with nine Levites and two priests, who were to visit all the cities of Judah, “and had the book of the law of the Lord with them,” out of which they were to instruct the Lord’s people. The Levites on this mission taught, no less than the priests. There are also not wanting traces elsewhere, that the office assigned in Deut. xxxiii. 10 to the tribe of Levi, of teaching the people the judgments of the Lord, was realized not only by the priests, but also by the common Levites, who, as it seems, were on this very account distributed over the whole country, that they might be able to fulfil this office. In 2 Chron. xxxv. 3, the Levites are designated as those who taught all Israel; and in Neh. viii. 7, a number of Levites are particularly named, who expounded the law to the people in the public assembly. It appears that the Levites pursued the course open to them of the study of the law all the more diligently, since only in this sphere they could attain to a certain equality of rank with the priests, to whom was exclusively granted the higher service of the sanctuary. This is favoured by the number of Levites in the mission of Jehoshaphat, compared with that of the priests. The scribes, the *γραμματεῖς*—an expression which John avoids—were certainly, if not of the number of the priests, for the most part Levites. Before the forum of these belonged, according to Matt. xvii. 10, the present question. The question, Who art thou? has, according to the answer of John, another at the background: Art thou indeed the Christ? According

to Luke iii. 15, all were at this time revolving in their hearts the question, whether John were indeed the Christ. But not without cause did the deputies ask it in so reserved a manner. There were such important scriptural reasons against John's being the Christ—especially the descent from David, so expressly testified in Scripture, while John was of the priestly race—that they could not ask the question openly. The very fact that they ask so reservedly, shows that they are, indeed, conscious of the opposing grounds. They might not, however, regard the matter beforehand as settled. For this, their desire for the appearance of the Messiah was too great, the proofs of the spirit and power which John had given too apparent, and the exposition of Old Testament prophecy subject to too many vacillations, especially in the condition of exegesis at that time. Before they entered more deeply into the matter, they would, at all events, first have the declaration of John himself. They would not, however, so far bind themselves, as by an open and unreserved question to admit the possibility of John's being the Christ. The answer of John is quoted in ver. 20, with the words, “And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed.” The second *ἀμολόγησε* resumes the first; by which it is indicated that the emphasis rests on *ἀμολόγησε*, and that *καὶ οὐκ ἡριήσατο* occupies only a tributary position, and is to bring into view the importance of the confession, by hinting the possibility of another course, and the inducement thereto. Luther says, “He repeats once more, and says: and denied not, but confessed. Without doubt, that thus he might praise the rare firmness of John in a great temptation, by which he was tempted to a great fall from the truth. And regard the circumstances. It is as though the whole people came to him, and offered him the honour. O what a wind was that! How it would have puffed up, where it found a mere worldly heart!” It appears that the Evangelist alludes to the declaration of the Lord in Matt. x. 32, 33: Whosoever therefore shall *confess* Me, etc., and, But whosoever shall *deny* Me, etc. John had acted in the spirit of this declaration, even before it was made. If he had not denied that he was Christ, he would have denied Christ. Luther: “Their design was, that he should deny Christ, and should not confess himself who he was. But because he adheres firmly to this, and confesses what he is, and is

not, his work is before God a rare confession, and not a denial." —John says, "I am not the Christ." According to the best authorized reading, ἐγώ stands first, emphatically. In this emphasis, there is a preparation for ver. 26. With Elias stands merely οὐκ εἰμί. There was no other. Augustine says on this answer of the Baptist, "My brethren, the greatest merit which John had was that humility, that, when he might have deceived the people, and allowed himself to be taken for Christ (for of such grace and excellence was he), he yet confessed openly, and said, I am not the Christ." Quesnel: "A truly humble man rejoices when he finds opportunity to make himself known as what he is, by scattering the false conceptions which have been formed of him." He does it simply, distinctly, energetically, without leaving any ambiguity. He has nothing to do with certain refusals, when one holds back with the one hand that which he throws away with the other, and when one, without divesting himself of the honour of the rank which he without right occupies in the minds of others, wishes to enjoy that also of humility."

Ver. 21. "And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not." —Luther says, "As he would not have this honour, they tried another." Lampe: "From a like source they continue to try whether, in some other way, from the person of John they may not obtain a hope of gaining their wish, by asking him whether he is Elias." The question, How is it compatible that the Baptist here denies that he is Elias, and that our Lord declares him to be Elias? is answered briefly and well by Calvin: "With perfect correctness does John answer that he is not Elias, for he speaks according to their apprehension. But Christ, according to the correct exposition of the prophets, assures that he is Elias, Matt. xi. 14." The personal return of Elias, before the advent of the Messiah, was expected on the ground of the misunderstood passage, Mal. iv. 5, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD." The prophet purposely adds—*the prophet*, to intimate that the name Elijah is used typically—that it refers not to the personality, but to the spirit and power of Elijah. The scribes, however, in their coarse literalness, their bad "realism," founded on this passage the doctrine of the approaching personal reappearance of Elijah. To this

the passage was referred by the LXX., and by Jesus Sirach, Eccl'us. xlviii. 10. Cf. my Christol. vol. 4, p. 219. In Matt. xvii. 10, the disciples are moved, by the sudden disappearance of the personal Elias at the transfiguration, to ask how this agreed with the opinion of the scribes, founded on Malachi, that the personal Elias should appear before the Messiah, to enter upon a permanent and successful activity. To this false literal exposition the New Testament always opposes, in constant sequence, the spiritual interpretation. In the message of the angel to Zacharias it is said, Luke i. 16, 17, *καὶ πολλοὺς τῶν νιῶν Ἰσραὴλ ἐπιστρέψει ἐπὶ κύριον τὸν Θεὸν αὐτῶν καὶ αὐτὸς προελεύσεται ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ ἐν πνεύματι καὶ δυνάμει Ἡλίου, ἐπιστρέψαι καρδίας πατέρων ἐπὶ τέκνα.* Here the two principal related passages, Mal. iii. 1, and iv. 5, 6, are connected with each other. The phrase, “in the spirit and power of Elijah,” raises itself above the then current apprehension, and declares, that the flesh is of no use. Where the pars melior of Elias is, his spirit and his power—and these are to reappear in John—there is Elias. Of a merely preliminary fulfilment, to be followed by the real one in the future—according to the hypothesis of several Christian expositors—there is here not a single trace. Christ, like the angel, refers the prophecy of Malachi simply and unconditionally to John the Baptist. He says in Matt. xi. 14, *καὶ εἰ θέλετε δέξασθαι, αὐτός ἐστιν Ἡλίας ὁ μέλλων ἐρχεσθαι.* The preliminary words, And if ye will receive it, far from weakening the force of, *This is*, rather strengthen it, by indicating that the non-recognition of Elias in John was the result of a faulty spiritual disposition. In Matt. xvii. 10 sq., the Lord answers the question of the disciples, as to how they must regard the assertion of the scribes, that Elias must first come, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. “Then the disciples understood,” says the Evangelist, “that He spake unto them of John the Baptist.” Now, it has been supposed that John should not have contented himself with the mere negation; if he really held himself to be the Elias of prophecy, he must have said so. But to this, Quesnel has already excellently answered: “St John has the spirit and the power of Elias, but he does not consider himself under the necessity of discovering it, since he may hide it without injury to the truth. He is com-

pletely filled by the greatness of his Lord, and thinks only of abasing himself before Him." If John had sought his own honour, he would have immediately added to the negation a positive affirmation. But he contents himself with saying who he is not. What is here missed, he adds afterwards, when he is asked who he is. The discreet negation here is met by the discreet affirmation in ver. 23, in completion of the harmony with the declarations of Christ. By declaring himself here to be the "voice crying in the wilderness" of Isaiah, John declares himself at the same time to be the "My messenger" and the Elias of Malachi, according to the correct interpretation. It has been shown in the Christology, that the prophecy of Malachi is only a resumption of that of Isaiah, and that it is constantly regarded as such by the Baptist, by Christ, and the Apostles.

The subordinates ask further : Art thou the Prophet ? and the Baptist answers : No. Luther has essentially altered the sense by the translation, *A prophet*. John certainly could not deny that he was *a* prophet without compromising his whole appearance. "All hold John as a prophet," declare the high priests and elders in Matt. xxi. 26. This would not have been possible if John himself had refused this dignity. The Lord declares in Matt. xi. 9, that the prophetic dignity was imparted to John in its highest human potency. It is a manifest evasion, when Augustine, in reference to this passage, says : Non erat propheta Johannes, sed major quam propheta. The question, Art thou *the* Prophet ? has reference to Deut. xviii. 15, "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me ; unto Him ye shall hearken." This is the only passage of the Old Testament in which a future messenger of God is announced as a "Prophet." That the passage was interpreted repeatedly in the times of Christ as Messianic, is clear from i. 46, vi. 14, iv. 25 ; Acts iii. 22, vii. 37. But that this interpretation had not attained to full security and general diffusion, is shown by vii. 40, 41, where, from those who said in regard to Christ, "Of a truth this is the Prophet," others are distinguished who said, "This is the Christ;" as also, even in the later Jewish exegesis, some explained the passage not of the Messiah, but of another prophet of the future. It had its foundation in the nature of Messianic prophecy itself, in its fragmentary character, that

single sides only of the Messianic nature and vocation could be brought forward, so that before the fulfilment one might easily be quite uncertain whether that did not refer to different persons, which was only a difference of relations. In all prophecy the fulfilment of which is still future, the interpretation is exposed to many fluctuations, and in the best case only a main road of correct exposition, with many by-paths, is attained. Moreover, it is not necessarily implied in the words, *Art thou the Prophet?* that the inquirers themselves decidedly assumed a difference of the Prophet from the Messiah, but only that there were those who cherished this opinion, and that the inquirers themselves did not in advance and absolutely reject it. The question, Who art thou? is explained by the following, What sayest thou of thyself? They wished first of all to know, who John declared himself to be, in order then to examine what he had in accordance therewith. The Baptist answered, *No*, because the Prophet is Christ, ver. 46, v. 45-47; Matt. xvii. 5.—Our text has nothing to do with Luke ix. 19; Matt. xvi. 14, according to which some took Christ to be the risen Jeremiah, or some other of the ancient prophets. By the Prophet absolutely, we may not think of any single subordinate personality. That opinion has its ground in the false interpretation of the prophecy of Malachi concerning Elijah the prophet. If Elias is to return, a similar thing is to be expected also of other distinguished prophetic peculiarities—above all, of Jeremiah, who was a principal prophetic figure in the period subsequent to the captivity.

Ver. 22. “Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us: what sayest thou of thyself? 23. He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.”—“True humility,” says Quesnel, “is free from all affectation. It will be compelled, but it yields to authority with a wise simplicity.” The Baptist could not avoid the answer to the positive and general question without wounding the respect towards the spiritual magistracy, and without denying the office committed to him by God. John says who he is, with a reference to a prophetic declaration of the Old Testament, which formed the basis of his appearance. It is said in Isa. xl. 3-5, “The voice of him that crieth in the wil-

derness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low ; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain : 5. And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together : for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.” Of this passage the beginning is here quoted. The LXX. renders ver. 3 thus : Φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἔτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου, εὐθεῖας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡμῶν. Matthew has in iii. 3, ἔτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου, εὐθεῖας ποιεῖτε τὰς τρίβους αὐτοῦ. Mark in i. 3, and Luke in iii. 4, follow Matthew. Here the two clauses of the verse are compressed into one : from the first is taken the way of the Lord, and from the second, the make straight,—the יְשִׁירָה of the original text is rendered by a single word. In vers. 1 and 2 it is announced to the people languishing in deep wretchedness, that the Lord has determined to be gracious, and to impart to them the fulness of His salvation. The condition of this salvation is penitence. That the Lord will, before the appearance of the salvation, prepare the means for it by the awakening of powerful exhortations to repentance, is foretold in vers. 3 and 4. Then after ver. 5 follows the appearance of the Lord Himself, the preparation for which is described in vers. 3 and 4. We have to take, *the voice of one crying*, as an exclamation : What is it that I perceive ? בַּמְדֵבֶר stands in the original text in a certain independence between the preceding and the following, so that it in like manner belongs to both (Christol. vol. 4, p. 172) : The voice of one crying in the wilderness ; Prepare, is equivalent to, *cries in the wilderness*, Prepare in the wilderness. Here, after the example of the LXX. and of Matthew, it is attached simply to the preceding. That the voice of the crying one must proceed from the covenant-people is shown by the words, *our God*. As the proclamation proceeds from the covenant-people, so it is also addressed to the covenant-people. John, in saying, *I am the voice*, speaks not exclusively, but positively. This announcement, like the closely connected prophecy of Malachi concerning the messenger who should precede the advent of the Lord, iii. 1, finds its fulfilment not merely in the appearance of John, but also in the inceptive activity of Christ Himself and of His Apostles, in so far as this was a supplement and continuation

of that of John, an indication and preparation of the *drawing nigh* of the kingdom of God. John, however, is the proper incarnation of the voice of him crying in the wilderness, he in whom this voice became a person, because he was the forerunner of the Lord, and nothing further; so that whatever of the agency of Christ belongs here, may be fairly reckoned as his. The *wilderness* is the condition of spiritual and bodily wretchedness in which the people are. It is a question, what is to be understood by *preparing the way of the Lord*. Luther is of opinion, “This is the preparation of the way of Christ, and the peculiar office of Christ, that He should humble all the world, and should say, that they are all together lost sinners, condemned, poor, needy, wretched men.” But it is evident that John not only requires repentance in this sense, but much rather *μετάνοια*, change of disposition and the direction of the life, a new walk in righteousness. A glance at ver. 4 in Isaiah, where the preparation of the way of the Lord is declared more exactly, and to the particular demands which John, according to Luke iii., makes on the people, plainly shows this. We must, however, be careful, in the determination of the sense of John’s: Prepare the way of the Lord, not to fall into an irreconcilable contradiction to his express reference to Christ as the Lamb of God, which bears the sins of the world. This Luther already indicates: “John, indeed, bears witness, and says, Reform and do penance: but that by this he does not mean, Thou shalt reform thyself, and by thyself remove even one sin, he mightily testifies by the other part, when he says, Behold the Lamb of God taketh away the sins of all the world.” If John had believed himself to possess the power of effecting a real moral reformation, he could not have pointed so expressly to Christ as the Only one who baptizes with the Holy Ghost. What is then the work of John? He requires not mere knowledge of sin, but real renovation of life; but because the true treasures of forgiveness of sins and of the Holy Spirit are laid up only in Christ (if they did not belong to Him exclusively, He must have shared with John the honour of “unveiling the glory of the Lord”), so in the last result Luther has recognised the correct interpretation. John can, indeed, effect in his susceptible hearers an external decency, a *justitia civilis*; but with respect to the most inward part, he can only succeed in arousing a lively

contest in the mind, a struggle with sin, a calling and crying out, O that Thou wouldest rend the heavens and come down! This it is which is properly aimed at; this is the unconditionally necessary prerequisite of the unveiling of the glory of the Lord, which can never be manifest to secure sinners. Luther further remarks with perfect correctness, “The hindrance, however, which allows no room for the Lord, is not only the gross bodily sins of unchastity, anger, vanity, avarice, etc., but much rather the spiritual darkness and the legal pride of the Pharisee, who esteems his good life and works, who is secure in them, and will neither condemn them himself, nor will have them condemned.” Pride, which is the soul of the then prevalent disease of the people, Pharisaism, is rendered expressly prominent in the original passage in Isaiah by the side of their abjectness and despondency: “Every mountain and hill shall be made low.” Moreover, it must not be overlooked, that John, by the manner of his definition of his office, knocks at the door of the consciences of the messengers, and unpleasantly disturbs them in their consciousness of the grandeur of their mission. P. Anton: “My office is a hodosophy. The question now is—How are *you* preparing the way of the Lord?” Berleb. Bibel: “You will indeed feel the voice in your conscience.”

Ver. 24. “And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. 25. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?”—Before, the office of the deputies was stated; here is indicated the *party* to which they belonged. This indication must have reference to the question which they addressed to the Baptist, according to ver. 25. The Pharisees were, according to Acts xxvi. 5, the straitest sect, the *αἱρεσίς ἀκριβεστάτη*. Its members watched everywhere with inquisitorial severity, to see that the theocratic order was preserved intact, not merely as to the ritual, but also with respect to the competence of office and doctrine. Cf. ix. 13, vii. 47, 48, xii. 42. All that was different to their preconceived opinions, they were at hand to call into question and to judge. Our Lord’s “Judge not,” in Matt. vii. 1, was spoken chiefly in opposition to this pharisaic spirit.—The question which the pharisaic delegates addressed to John they would have spared themselves, if they had recognised, on the one hand, the compass of the words, I am the voice of one cry-

ing, etc.,—in which it was included, that John, of course, in a certain sense, if not in that of the Pharisees, laid claim to the dignity of Elias,—and on the other hand, the significance of the baptism of John, as a merely preparatory act. The Baptist, in his answer, calls attention to this doubly false basis of the question. As regards the first, he supplements Isa. xl. 3 by pointing to Mal. iii. 1, the commentary and continuation, where the forerunner of the Lord comes out more bodily. If he is the voice crying in the wilderness, he is also he of whom it is written in Mal. iii. 1, “Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me;” he is also he of whom it is written, Mal. iv. 5, 6, “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet—and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers;” for there can be no doubt that Elijah the prophet is identical with “My messenger.” If therefore he is not *their* Elias, he is the Elias of divine prophecy in its true sense.<sup>1</sup> As regards the second, he intimates, that his baptism belongs only to a relatively subordinate sphere; that it only prepares for the advent of a higher one, by whom it should receive its completion and fulfilment. The baptism of John rests principally on Isa. i. 16, “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil.” The forgiveness of sins, and the impartation of the Holy Ghost, of which it is the condition, belong chiefly to the glorification of the baptism of John by Christ. The fulfilment of Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you: a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you;” and of Zech. xiii. 1, “In that day there shall be a fountain opened in the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness,”—in its main points, far exceeds the sphere of John, although we certainly must not separate the preparatory grace, the beginnings of the impartation of forgiveness and of the Spirit, from the baptism of John. Cf. Christology, vol. 4, p. 235.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Calvin: In eo falluntur, quod Eliam illum non agnoscunt, cuius fit mentio apud Malachiam, tametsi Eliam se esse neget, quem ipsi somniabant.

<sup>2</sup> Lampe: Censuerim, Pharisæis ignotum non fuisse ex Ezek. xxxvi.

Ver. 26. "John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth One among you, whom ye know not. 27. He it is, who, coming after me, is preferred before me; whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose."—P. Anton: "You are not to stop with my baptism, so as to join yourselves to me, and break off from that upon which I would gladly see you wishing to enter. My baptism is only in anticipation. It will soon be over; so you need not give yourselves so much trouble: but you will receive Another among you, who indeed is already, in a manner unperceived, come among you." To his own inferior position, which is made known by the fact, that he can only baptize with water, and therefore produce no thorough, radical change in the disposition, John here opposes the exalted position of Christ in general, without expressly mentioning that He—as is said in ver. 33; Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 7, 8; Luke iii. 16—will baptize with the Holy Ghost, and at the same time also, those who do not submit to such baptism, with the *fire* (Matt. iii. 11; Luke iii. 16) of consuming judgment.<sup>1</sup> We are not justified in supplying here directly the antithesis of the baptism by the Spirit. The general antithesis of the inferior position of John, which is embodied in the mere baptism by water, and the absolute grandeur of Christ, is sufficient. Summa autem huc reddit, remarks Calvin, ut se dejiciat quantum fieri potest ne qua in parte honor perperam illi delatus Christi præstantiam obscuret.—That Christ stands already among them, the Baptist knows from Mal. iii. 1, according to which the advent of the Lord in the covenant-Angel is to follow immediately on the appearance of the forerunner. So certainly, therefore, as he was convinced of his own mission, so certain must he have been beforehand, that the Messiah was already on the ground. But that his conviction rested not on this only, the words, "whom ye know not," seem to show. For this deduction seems to presuppose that John had the

25, et Zach. xiii. 1, purificationem in temporibus Messiae exspectari. Unde argumentabantur neminem præter Messiam ejusve socios potestatem habere baptizandi. In quo scintilla aliqua veritatis latebat.

<sup>1</sup> We have the commentary to *καὶ πνεῦ*, in Luke iii. 16, in τὸ δὲ ἄκυρον κατακαύσει πνεῦ μοβέστῳ, in ver. 17. Already in Isa. iv. 4 there is the antithesis of the washing of filth by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning: the spirit of judgment, which transforms the willing, and the spirit of burning, which consumes the contrary.

knowledge, which the rulers of the people had not, because Christ had not yet made Himself publicly known, His epiphany not yet having taken place. In harmony with the intimation contained in these words, is the address with which the Baptist receives Christ, when He comes to his baptism, Matt. iii. 14, “I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?” —words which show that John already recognised in Christ the true Saviour, far exalted above the human sphere. The origin of this recognition is indicated by the Gospel of Luke, according to which John had already, in the earliest period of his life, been directed to Christ. It could not have been otherwise, than that in consequence of this he should direct his gaze incessantly to Christ, and should zealously follow up the traces of the Divine nature which shone forth in Him. But that this recognition of John was only a preliminary one, that he did not receive the absolute divine certainty of the revelation of the glory of the Lord in Christ until the baptism, is clear from vers. 31, 32, where he says, that he did not know Christ before the baptism. In harmony with this, is also the manner in which he here ascribes this knowledge to himself, only indirectly and by a gentle hint.—The words, “He it is, who, coming after me, is preferred before me,” have been already explained at ver. 15, and have been shown to rest on Mal. iii. 1. *Αὐτός ἐστιν* and *ὅς ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν* are wanting in important critical authorities. Vers. 15 and 30, however, where the testimony is repeated, require the genuineness especially of the latter words. The later reference to this speech of John has no point, if it is here quoted in a mutilated form, and robbed of its essential meaning. The abbreviation seems to have been called forth by the threefold repetition.—The unloosing of the shoe-latchet was one of the meanest services performed by slaves. Theophylact: *τὸ λύειν τὸ ὑπόδημα τῆς ἐσχάτης διακονίας ἐστὶν.* “Before no mortal,” says Lampe, “would the Baptist have thus humbled himself,—he, who was more than a prophet, so great, that among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist.” But He who in Malachi sends the messenger before Him, and Himself comes after, is יהָה, *the Lord*; for Him, therefore, that service is too small which is rendered by a servant to *any* lord. Before Him John, with his poor preparatory baptism, which

cannot truly forgive sins, nor bestow the Holy Ghost, must step quite into the background. “Let us learn,” says the Jansenist Quesnel, “to make a severe distinction between the honour which is shown to Jesus Christ, and that which is shown to the greatest of holy men (saints), and even to the mother of the Holy of holies. This is one of the first instructions which God has given us through St John; and we cannot act contrary to it without subverting everything in religion.”

Ver. 28. “These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.”—For Bethabara, the Syriac, Vulgate, and several MSS. read Bethania. According to Origen, this reading was found at his time in almost all the MSS.—*σχεδὸν ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις*,—a statement on which no great weight is to be laid, since Origen had certainly not, after the manner of a modern critic, examined a large number of MSS.; and since the assertion of Chrysostom has equal weight with his, and he says, that all the more exact MSS. have Bethabara; and Epiphanius also attributes the reading Bethania to only a few MSS. That which Origen urges against the reading Bethania, that there was no Bethany in this region, but there was a Bethabara,<sup>1</sup> is in fact not without force. There is nowhere any trace of another besides the well-known Bethany; and this is of all the more significance, since the name—House of the wretched,<sup>2</sup> quite otherwise than, e.g., House of fish, Bethsaida—is so singular, that there is beforehand no probability of its repeated occurrence. Beth-barā, on the other hand, which is without doubt a contraction of Bethabara, appears even in Judges vii. 24, as the principal passage across the Jordan: if Bethabara is misplaced, the Jordan also is misplaced. Just such a locality was particularly suitable for the purposes of John. The Berleb. Bibel remarks: “Bethabara was a right public place, where there was a ferry across the Jordan, and therefore a continual concourse of people going and returning.” It is also in favour of Bethabara, that, as Origen testifies, tradi-

<sup>1</sup> Αλλ' οὐδὲ ὄμανυμος τῇ Βηθανίᾳ τόπος ἐντὸν περὶ τὸν Ἰορδάνην δείκνυσθαι δὲ λέγοντοι παρὰ τῷ ὄχθῃ τοῦ Ἰορδάνου τὰ Βηθαβαρᾶ, ἔνθα ιστοροῦσι τὸν Ἰωάννην βεβαπτικένα.

<sup>2</sup> That the name is to be thus interpreted, is shown, among other things, by the Syriac translation. The rendering, *house of ships*, is to be rejected, if on this account only, that it does not suit the true Bethany.

tion placed the baptism of John at this place.<sup>1</sup> The name Bethabara suits the locality, and has its explanation in the following *πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου*: the name Bethania stands in no relation to the locality. The name, known from the Gospel history, might also easily be put for the more unfamiliar name. Bengel, who simply remarks, *nomen notius pro ignoto*, saw more sharply than modern critics. We must not overlook the assonance of the name Bethabara to עבר, in the prediction of Isaiah concerning the glorification of Peræa and Galilee in the time of the Messiah, to which the whole group gives a historical commentary. Cf. the local designations in ver. 44, ii. 1, 11.

In vers. 29–34 follows the Baptist's *second* witness for Christ.

Ver. 29. “The next day he (John) seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh upon Him the sin of the world!”—*Tῇ ἐπαύριον* cannot stand here with a more extended meaning. John reports here so accurately of the period which was so decisive for his own life in time and eternity, that in ver. 40 he states even the hour. “From this time forward,” says the Berleb. Bibel, “is kept a regular diary of the Messiah, as from day to day the person of Christ became better known.” The same writer remarks: “This day was very well suited for this. For the day before, John had frankly given his testimony. He is now rewarded for this fidelity, in that his principal comes to him.” We have already shown, that the coming of Jesus to John is no other than that for the purpose of being baptized, of which the first Evangelists give a particular account. Those who place the baptism earlier or later, must here remark, with Meyer, “for an object concerning which we are not more particularly acquainted;” which is the more doubtful, since, from all the indications, a more intimate personal intercourse between Jesus and John never existed, but was rather purposely avoided. History knows of only *one* coming of Jesus to John. Quesnel points out, how great it was in John “to have but once the consolation of speaking with Christ, and only to see Him in passing, and yet to be faithful to

<sup>1</sup> Jerome says: Bethabara, ubi Joannes baptizabat, unde et usque hodie plurimi de fratribus, hoc est de numero credentium, ibi renasci cupientes vitali gurgite baptizantur.

God."—"And saith :" namely, after in the mean time that had taken place, of which the account is given in Matt. iii. 13-17, and in Mark i. 9-11. When Jesus comes to John, the baptism has not yet taken place ; but what he here says, presupposes what happened at the baptism.—The "Behold," points away from John to Christ, as to Him who alone can satisfy the need for salvation of the human heart. That the Lamb is to be taken as not merely the emblem of calmness and patience, but much rather as a sacrificial lamb, who takes upon Him the sin of the world to atone for it, is clear from the circumstance, that in ver. 36, where John has not less than here the purpose to set forth Christ as the Redeemer of the world, the words, "who taketh upon Him the sin of the world," are wanting. Accordingly, this can only be the commentary and explanation : the conception of the Redeemer of the world must be contained already in the words, "the Lamb of God." Add to this, that in xix. 36, John transfers to Christ what is written in the Old Testament of the paschal lamb ; that in the Apocalypse, Christ, with respect to the redemption made by Him, is called *ἀρνίον ἐσφαγμένον*, and the blood of the Lamb, *αἷμα τοῦ ἀρνίου*, is spoken of ; and that also in 1 Pet. i. 19, Christ is represented as a Lamb without blemish and without spot, through whose blood we are redeemed. But that, among the different beasts used for the sin-offering, the lamb should be chosen as a symbol of the atoning Christ, is explained from its being most adapted to shadow forth the glorious attributes of Christ,—His innocence and righteousness : cf. 1 Pet. i. 19 ; and especially the glorious virtues which He manifested in His passion,—his calm patience and meekness. It is just this which forms the point of comparison in the passage of the Old Testament, in which the suffering Christ is already compared to a lamb. Isa. liii. 7 : "He was oppressed, and He was afflicted ; yet He opened not His mouth : He is brought as *a lamb to the slaughter*, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth." We must not, however, derive from this passage alone the reason why John here designates Christ as the Lamb of God. For, though Isaiah, in this whole section, teaches so decidedly and expressly the substitutionary office of the Servant of God, yet he does not place the emblem of the lamb in immediate relation thereto. Under this, he regards, not the substitutionary

character of Christ's sufferings, but His patience under them. Hence we must go back at the same time to the use of the lamb in the expiatory sacrifice,—but not to the ordinary sin-offering. The principal sacrificial beasts for the sin-offering were, according to Lev. iv., young bullocks: only such especially were used as a sin-offering for the congregation, and for the high priest. For the sin of the ruler a he-goat was offered; while a she-goat served for the expiation of a soul of the common people: in the latter case also, a lamb might be offered, but only a female. An extensive and important use of the lamb for the expiation of sin existed, however, at the Passover; and of this we must think the rather, as this atonement was the radical one, the foundation for all other expiatory sacrifices, and as in xix. 36 Christ appears as the antitype of the paschal lamb, and so also in 1 Cor. v. 7: *καὶ γὰρ τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἐτύθη Χριστός*. It has been objected to the reference to the paschal lamb, that this was not a proper sacrifice,—at all events, not an expiatory sacrifice. But this objection rests on a complete misapprehension of the meaning of the Pascha. That the Pascha was a sin-offering, was shown already by the name: redemption, and then redemptive and atoning sacrifice. But every doubt is removed by the account of the first institution. Since every first-born in Egypt was to die, the destroying angel spared all those houses which he found marked with the blood of the paschal lamb, as a sign of the cleansing from sin which had been there effected by this means. He who possessed this token might be certain of his exemption and redemption: Ex. xii. 23. His sins were laid on the lamb, the emblem of innocence. The expiatory blood of this lamb formed the boundary between Israel and the world. That the later celebration of the Passover was not a mere commemoration, is shown by the fact, that lambs continued to be slain as sacrifices. Where there is a sacrifice appointed by God, there also, in case it is offered in faith, must be a repetition of the first benefit, which is only distinguished from the others by forming the initial point of the great series. The paschal lamb formed the basis of all other sacrifices; the other sin-offerings had value and meaning only in connection with it; without it, they were mere dissevered limbs. It was peculiarly the covenant-offering,—that in which was concentrated the separation from the world of the people of God,

the people which has a reconciled God.<sup>1</sup> What distinguishes the paschal sacrifice from all other sin-offerings is, that with it was connected a communion, and that it was at the same time a sacrament. By this are explained the unessential differences from the other expiatory sacrifices, the perception of which has led many astray from the correct apprehension of the paschal offering.—The genitive Θεοῦ is one of appurtenance and possession. P. Anton correctly remarks, that it signifies, not only that this Lamb is sent and given by God (nor only, that it is well-pleasing to God, as in Ps. li. 19, the sacrifices of God are those well-pleasing to Him), but, at the same time, how near this Lamb is to God: cf. vers. 34, 49. In Zech. xiii. 7 it is said, “The man that is My fellow.” Explanatory of this genitive is Rev. v. 6, where the Lamb stands “in the midst of the throne and the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders,” as the Mediator between God and men; and Rev. vii. 17, “For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them”—where the relation of Christ to the Most High God is designated as a still more intimate one, He being partaker of the Divine glory.—In the words, ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἀμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου, the question of all others is, in what meaning the verb *aiρω* is to be taken. The expositors are divided, for the most part, between the meanings of *bear*, and *take away*. But both are opposed by not unimportant considerations. Against the meaning *bear*, it is sufficient that *aiρω*, from ἀνηρ, contracted from *aeιρω*,—properly, *to raise in the air*, then, *to raise, lift up*,—neither in biblical usage, nor in that of classical authors, ever means *to bear*. In Lam. iii. 27, LXX.: ἀγαθὸν ἀνδρὶ, ὅταν ἄρη ζυγὸν ἐν νεότητι αὐτοῦ, which has been adduced in favour of this meaning, it is not *bear*, but *take upon himself*. Then, on the supposition of the meaning *bear*, every connection is broken off between our passage and that in 1 John iii. 5, καὶ οἴδατε ὅτι ἐκεῖνος ἐφανερώθη, ἵνα τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν ἄρῃ· καὶ ἀμαρτία ἐν αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστι, where *aiρειν* stands with the meaning of *take away*. It is also decisive against the application of the meaning, *take away*, to our passage, that the declaration of John is, on this rendering, too far removed from the original passage of the Old Testament, on which, by the concession of all, it is founded, Isa. liii. That

<sup>1</sup> See my Treatise on the Sacrifices of Holy Scripture, p. 24 sq. Clark's For. Theol. Library. Commentary on Ecclesiastes, etc., p. 388.

the Servant of God is to take upon Him, and bear, the sin and its punishment, is there the constantly repeated, fundamental thought. Compare ver. 4, “Surely He hath borne (taken upon Him) our griefs (sicknesses), and carried our sorrows :” ver. 11, “By His knowledge will My righteous Servant justify many ; for He shall bear their iniquities :” ver. 12, “And He bare (took upon Him) the sin of many.” We avoid the difficulties which meet us in both renderings, if we take *aἴρω* in the sense of, *to take upon one's self*, which may be derived with facility from the meaning, *raise, lift up*; as indeed the Hebrew נָשׁׂ also, with which the *aἴρειν* is without doubt to correspond, means first, *to raise*, and then *to take upon one's self*; and in this sense the verb can be proved to occur elsewhere in the New Testament : cf. *aἴρειν τὸν σταυρόν*, Matt. xvi. 24; *aἴρειν τὸν χύγον*, Matt. xi. 29. Even the ancients called attention to the circumstance that the particip. present is here used,—that it is not said, He *will* bear, but, He *bears*. The participle present designates, besides contemporaneousness, also continued action. Its use here indicates the continued power of Christ's offering. It is decisive against the hypothesis of Meyer, that the present is used because the Baptist prophetically represents the atoning act as present, that equally in the original passage of Isaiah the taking upon Him and bearing of sin by the Servant of God, appears as a continuing act, in intimation of the continued power of His atoning sacrifice. In Isa. liii. 11 it is said, “By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many ; for He shall bear their iniquities.” The bearing of iniquities is here, in substance, identical with the justification. The Servant of God has once for all borne the sin : he who *knows* Him, his sins, in the power of the substitution effected by His blood, He takes upon Himself. Thus far the taking upon Him and bearing is a continued act. In the same sense, it is said in ver. 12, “And He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” נָשׁׂ here corresponds to יְסִבֵּל in ver. 11, and, like this, designates not a temporary, but an enduring action of the Servant of God.—In the words, “of the world,” has been found, quite incorrectly, an “extension to entire humanity of the representation of Isaiah, concerning the expiation of the sin of the people.” The Servant of God appears as Saviour of the *world* throughout the second part of Isaiah, and especially in lii. 13–liii. What can be plainer

than lli. 15, “ So shall He sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at Him : for those which have not been told shall see, and which heard not shall consider ? ”—It is of great significance, that John the Baptist, speaking in the Spirit and by direct commission from God, who first presents Christ to the Church by the Baptist, thus designates the work of Christ, by pointing to the substitutionary expiation and atonement as its kernel and centre. (Calvin : *Alia quidem beneficia nobis confert Christus, sed hoc summum, ex quo reliqua dependent, quod iram Dei placando facit, ut justi et puri censeamur.*) We learn from this, that our highest endeavour should be directed to this end, to enter into essential relation to this side of the being of Christ ; that also, by a Christian in spirit and in truth, he only should be esteemed with whom this is really the case ; finally, that the Church has this task, to keep this doctrine as the apple of its eye, and that its so extensive abandonment in the theology of the present day is a sign of deep decline. The condemnation of all theories, springing from Rationalism, concerning the justification of the sinner before God, is declared by the words, *ἴδε ὁ ἀμυνός*, etc.; on which Augustine already remarks : “ *Jam intendite, contra quos superbos intendebat digitum Joannes. Non dum erant nati hæretici, et jam ostendebantur : contra illos clamabat tunc a fluvio,* ” etc.—John says further, ver. 30, “ This is He of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me ; for He was before me.” It ought never to have been doubted, what is so apparent, that John here takes up again his declaration, made on the day previous, ver. 27, and declares that it applies to the person standing before him. We gave the explanation already at ver. 15, where the same expression of John, which here occurs in its historical connection, was interwoven with the Prologue. The only peculiarity here is, that the Messiah is designated as *man*. He is so called in Zech. vi. 12: “ Behold the man, *שָׁנָה*, whose name is The Branch ; and He shall grow up out of His place, and shall build the temple of the *LORD* ;” and in Zech. xiii. 7 : “ Against the man, *נָבָר*, that is My fellow.” P. Anton remarks on the words, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me : “ By this strange enunciation he wishes to induce us to the inquiry, what sort of a man this is, who thus comes with two natures, *gigas geminæ substantiæ*.”

After John has declared who Christ is, and what He is to accomplish for the world, he gives a further account, in vers. 31–34, on what ground this sublime knowledge in Him is founded: not on a human, but on an absolutely Divine, on immediate Divine, revelation,—as this was absolutely necessary, if his declaration was to be of consequence to the Church. As *testimony*, it can be of importance only as an account of that which John himself has seen and heard.

Ver. 31. “And I knew Him not: but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.”—Lücke correctly remarks: “From the manner in which the words, And I knew Him not, are taken up again in ver. 33, it is seen that vers. 32–34 do not begin a testimony different from vers. 29–31, as is asserted by Lampe; but vers. 32–34 give to the speech in ver. 31 its connection and conclusion.” The words, I knew Him not, form only the introduction to the narrative of the manner in which John learned to know Him with divine certainty. A separation of vers. 32–34 is the less to be thought of, since in this connection everything is assigned to a definite time, and here belong only such things as occurred on the day designated in ver. 29. The course of thought, therefore, is this: And I knew Him not; but still my whole ministry had regard to Him. But now I have recognised Him with divine certainty. The declaration, I knew Him not, which the Baptist here makes with respect to the whole time before the baptism of Jesus, appears at first view to be in irreconcilable contradiction to Matt. iii. 14, where John forbids Christ, when He comes to be baptized, saying, ἐγὼ χρείαν ἔχω ὑπὸ σοῦ βαπτισθῆναι, καὶ σὺ ἐρχῃ πρός με; These words presuppose that John recognised in Jesus the Son of God. “He,” says Calvin, “would have done great wrong to God and his own baptism, if he had thus spoken to any other but the Son of God.” The solution of the difficulty is this, that, I knew Him not, is here to be taken relatively. With respect to the clearness which he had just received, the former seemed to him as darkness. In the emphatic use of language, complete knowledge only is regarded as knowledge, as in Matt. vii. 23, the Lord says, “I know you not,” to those who had stood in manifold but only external relations to Him. The words, “I knew Him not,” thus apprehended, are even corroborated by Matthew. For to what other purpose is

the voice from heaven, in iii. 17, *οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ νίος μου ὁ ἀγαπητὸς, ἐν φωνῇ εὐδόκεσσα*, than to make Christ known to the Baptist, and through him to the Church? This voice does not address itself to Jesus: Thou art; but it speaks of Jesus,—therefore to the Baptist. (Mark, i. 11, and Luke have certainly *σὺ εἶ*; but that Matthew has the more exact account, is shown by comparison with Isa. xlvi. 1, and the allusion *here* in ver. 34.) With this rendering ver. 26 is also in harmony. For, when John there, before the baptism of Christ, says to the Pharisees with regard to Him, Whom *ye* know not, he intimates by this, that he has this knowledge. An absolute ignorance also is not to be supposed, either from the conduct of Jesus on the one hand, or from the conduct of the Baptist on the other. The conclusion therefore is, that when John says, I knew Him not, he means nothing more than what is testified by the fact, that at the baptism Christ was made known to him by an appearance and a heavenly voice. It is an illustrative case, when in ii. 11 it is said, *ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ*: as though they had then for the first time attained to faith, although the particulars had been already related, of their attaining to faith in the case of Nathanael (i. 51), even with the use of the word *πιστεύειν*. This phrase, “His disciples believed on Him,” occurs in substance on every new revelation of the glory of the Lord. In xvi. 30, the disciples again declare that now, now for the first time, they have attained to faith, *ἐν τούτῳ πιστεύομεν ὅτι ἀπὸ Θεοῦ ἐξῆλθες*; and in ver. 31 Jesus declares even this faith to be not a stedfast one; so that new steps have still to be mounted, from which the former will appear like unbelief. Of John it is not said until after the resurrection, xx. 8, *καὶ εἶδε καὶ ἐπίστευσε*. It is, however, to be observed, that the declaration, I knew Him not, here receives its relation to a knowledge leading to an absolute certainty by the account, given in immediate connection in the following verse, of the manner in which John received such knowledge. Of a contradiction to the earlier Evangelists, the last of whom, Luke, relates that the Baptist stood in a relation to Christ even before His birth, no one in this single case will think, who has perceived the general relation of John to the three first Evangelists.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The difficulty was already clearly and sharply perceived in the age of the Church Fathers. Augustine says: *Si post baptismum descendit co-*

How is it to be understood that John baptized, in order that thus Christ might be made manifest to Israel? It has been quite incorrectly answered, “The Baptist baptized in order that *he* might become acquainted with the Messiah, and in consequence also the people.” The key to the correct understanding is given by Isa. xl. 3–5. According to this passage, the “voice of him crying in the wilderness” was the necessary pre-condition of the manifestation of the glory of the Lord; and its object, therefore, was to bring this about. The manifestation of the glory of the Lord is, according to the conception of the Baptist, to take place in the appearance of the Messiah, whom he places in the most intimate relation to Jehovah. Cf. remarks on ver. 15. In ii. 11 also, Isa. xl. 5 is referred to Christ. The baptism of John corresponds to the preparing of the way in Isaiah. As the latter is the emblem, so the former is the embodiment, of the *μετάνοια*, which is the condition of the unveiling of the now concealed glory of the Lord.

Ver. 32. “And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him.”—John places, in opposition to his ignorance hitherto, the fact by which he attained to knowledge; as though he said: And now I have just seen. The interposed words, *καὶ ἐμαρτύρησεν*, etc., interrupt the discourse of John, in order to indicate, that we have here the *punctum saliens* in the discourse of the Baptist,—that, viz., for which this discourse was communicated by the Evangelist. The subject of the *testimony* is the fact, that which John has *seen*. Only that knowledge is quite real, which rests on such a fact. How did the Baptist see the Spirit descend on Jesus at the baptism? Origen gives the preference to a “spiritual view,” *θεωρίᾳ νοητική*. Theodore of Mopsuestia says: “The descent of the Spirit was not seen by all those who were present, but only by means of a spiritual vision by John, as it was the manner of the prophets to see in the midst of

*lumba, et antequam baptizaretur Dominus, dixit illi Joannes: Tu ad me venis, ego a te debo baptizari: ante, illum noverat, cui dixit: Tu ad me venis, ego a te debo baptizari: quomodo ergo dixit: Et ego nesciebam eum.—Non parva quæstio est, fratres mei. Si vidistis quæstionem, non parum vidistis: superest ut ipsius solutionem Dominus det.* The solution is: Joannes secundum aliquid noverat, secundum aliquid non noverat Dominum. In the more particular determination, however, Augustine errs from the correct interpretation.

many that which was invisible to all. For it would not be proper to say, that John bare record, and said that he had seen the Spirit, if all those present participated in his beholding." In fact, if the phenomenon had been visible to the bodily eyes, the "record" of John would have lost all significance. The superiority of his position would then be entirely gone. In Matthew, Mark, and John, moreover, the opening of heaven, and the descent of the dove, are narrated not by themselves, but only in connection with their perception by Christ and by John. In Matt. iii. 16, the heavens are opened to Christ, and he sees the Spirit of God descend, ἀνεῳχθησαν αὐτῷ οἱ οὐρανοὶ, καὶ εἶδε τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ Θεοῦ καταβαῖνον : Mark says, i. 10, εἶδε σχιζομένους τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα καταβαῖνον : in John, the Baptist says, τεθέαμαι τὸ πνεῦμα καταβαῖνον. In Luke, finally, the internal character of the event is rendered the more distinct, as the opening of the heaven occurred when Jesus was *praying*, iii. 21. That any other person besides Jesus and John perceived the appearance, there is nowhere any indication. It is also of significance, that the opening of heaven, which is mentioned by the first Evangelists, has regard to Ezek. i. 1.<sup>1</sup> But here it takes place, as expressly stated, in a vision. The result obtained is so far important, that by it the assertion, often made, is once for all refuted, that all events narrated in Scripture must belong to the sphere of the external, of which the contrary is not expressly remarked. Cf. my treatise on Balaam. We must certainly distinguish severely from each other objectivity and externality. It is not the objectivity which is in question, but in what sense the objective was perceived. If we mistake this,—if we say with Lücke, "If the appearance of the Spirit as a dove was external, objective, it could, it must have been, perceived by others also;" if with him, in the place of a vision which presupposes something objective, which is spiritually seen, we put a mere imagination of John, the genesis of which is to be psychologically explained,<sup>2</sup>—it is inconceivable how the words of the Baptist here are to be regarded as a

<sup>1</sup> To Ezekiel the heaven is opened in the thirtieth year by the river Chebar : sic Christus anno 30 ætatis juxta fluvium in Judæa coelos aperitos habuit.

<sup>2</sup> Lücke, p. 427 : "Inwardly, in a spiritual vision; which did not, however, arise arbitrarily in him, but was determined by a preceding prophetic

“ record,” or how in ver. 34 such weight can be laid upon the circumstance, that the Baptist bare record of that which he had seen,—such a beholding, certainly, gives no true material for a *μαρτυρία*, xix. 35,—and it is inconceivable how the Saviour Himself, in v. 33, can lay weight on this testimony of John. But it is decisive against such a view, that what according to the first Evangelists is beheld by Jesus, is according to John beheld by the Baptist. A vision, which is only another designation of that which is otherwise called an imagination, can be had only by a single person; while the same object may be spiritually beheld by several persons, who have a cultivated spiritual sense, at the same time. How striking this instance is, is clear from the fact, that Meyer is driven by it to the assumption, that in the “Synoptics” the vision has been “altered by tradition to an objective proceeding.” Finally, the objectivity of the event is testified by Luke iii. 21, 22. There, the opening of heaven, the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the voice from heaven, are spoken of, without reference to the perception by Jesus or by the Baptist. That a real dove is not to be thought of, is shown by the word “*like*,” which is added by all the Evangelists. Ambrosius: “non columba descendit, sed quasi columba;” and: “Spiritus sanctus in specie columbæ, non in veritate columbæ descendit de cœlo.” On the other hand, that the comparison with a dove refers not merely to the hovering motion, but also to the form, is shown not merely by the words, “in a bodily shape,” *σωματικῷ εἶδει*, of Luke, but is clear also from the *τεθέαμαι* here. For the *beholding* presupposes the existence of a bodily form; and what this was, must be expressed in the words, *ὡς περιστεράν*, because otherwise it would remain indeterminate, which is not allowable. But why does the Holy Spirit present Himself in the form of a dove? The right answer was perceived already by Clement of Alexandria: “God wished to show, by the image of the dove, the simplicity and meekness of the new appearance of the Spirit.” The commentary to the appearance of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, is afforded in the beatitude of the *πραεῖς*, the *ἔλεγμονες*, the *καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ*, the *εἰρηνοποιοί*, in the Sermon on the Mount, and, above all, by excitement, and by the Jewish exposition and symbolization of the Messianic Spirit of creation hovering on the water.”

the word of the Lord, Matt. x. 16, “Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless *as doves*.” The character of the members of the kingdom of Christ is here prefigured, which is founded in the operation of the Holy Spirit. The basis for this symbolism is furnished by the Old Testament. In the superscription to Ps. lvi., the dove is the emblem of defenceless and inoffensive innocence. In Song of Sol. v. 2, the bridegroom says to the bride, the type of the daughters of Zion, the representative of the associates of the kingdom, “Open to me, my sister, my love, *my dove, my undefiled*.” The latter is the explanation and interpretation of the former. תְמִית can mean only, *my irreproachable, my righteous one*. In Gen. xxv. 27, תְמִת is used of Jacob, the father of the family; and in Job i. 1, together with שָׁׁלֵמֶת, of Job, the type of Israel. The LXX. has τελεία μον. Cf. Matt. v. 48; Phil. iii. 15. In Song of Sol. i. 15, it is said, “Behold, thou art fair, my love; thine eyes doves.” So also in iv. 1. “The comparison of the eyes of the daughter of Zion with doves, designates the Lord’s community as the companionship of the *meek*, as having the character of innocence, meekness, and kindness.” It is also said of the bridegroom, v. 12, “His eyes as doves by the rivers of waters.” With reference to these Old Testament passages, the appearance of the Spirit in the form of a dove typified the character of the Church, which it should receive by the Holy Ghost. Quesnel: “Innocence, simplicity, meekness, love, fruitfulness in good works, etc.,—these are the virtues which Jesus and the Holy Ghost would infuse in us; the one taking for a symbol the lamb, and the other the dove.” The words, “and it abode on Him,” have regard to Isa. xi. 2, where it is said of Christ, “And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.” This prophecy of Isaiah received, in the event of the text, a symbolical representation. The reference to it is still more evident here than in Matt. iii. 16, where the parallel passage, Isa. xlvi. 1, is taken more into view. Instead of καὶ ἔμεινεν ἐπ' αὐτὸν, is in ver. 33 καὶ μένον ἐπ' αὐτόν. The preterite, and it abode (as I saw) upon Him, is used here, as it seems, to render more apparent the reference to תהה in the original passage; so that the word ἔμεινε is to be considered as provided with quotation-marks.

Cf. besides, Buttmann's Gramm., S. 327. "Jesus Christ," says Quesnel, "is alone worthy to receive the Holy Spirit in His entire fulness; and St John is worthy to be the first to learn so great a mystery. The more one is filled with the Holy Spirit, the more does he conceive in what fulness Jesus Christ has received it, in order to communicate it." This communication of the Holy Spirit to believers has its foundation in this fact, and is prefigured by it. As certainly as the Holy Spirit descended on Christ at His baptism, and abode on Him, so certainly must that also take place which is narrated in Acts ii. 3, *καὶ ὥφθησαν αὐτοῖς διαμεριζόμεναι γλῶσσαι ὡσεὶ πυρὸς, ἐκάθισέ τε ἐφ' ἓνα ἔκαστον αὐτῶν*, and in 1 Pet. iv. 14, *ὅτι τὸ τῆς δόξης καὶ τὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ πνεῦμα ἐφ' ὑμᾶς ἀναπαύεται*. Christ has received the Holy Spirit not merely for Himself, but in order that, as is said immediately afterwards, as the Head of the Church, He may baptize its members with the Holy Spirit. Luther says: "But behold what great glory the baptism has, also what a great thing it is, that, when Christ has been baptized, the heaven opens, the Father allows His voice to be heard, the Holy Ghost comes down, not as a spectre, but in the form and shape of a natural dove. If the baptism had been a human work and doing, such high things would not here have come to pass. God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, still stand daily around us at our baptism."

Ver. 33. "And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."—That which John saw receives its full significance only in this, that he had learned the meaning of this appearance by a preceding Divine revelation. We perceive from our text, that the Baptist was esteemed worthy of immediate Divine communications, and that it is therefore wrong to measure his declarations by the standard of the then current Jewish theology, to twist and interpret them by this, or to deny their genuineness because they will not agree with it. On the words, "Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending," Meyer correctly remarks: "Namely, while thou art baptizing Him with water. John, sent to baptize, must, in fulfilment of this calling, await the promised revelation." The sign, moreover, stands to the thing designated

in an inner and essential connection, which is only discovered by the revelation made to the Baptist. The Spirit coming down and resting on Christ, is the *source* from which He baptizes with the Holy Ghost. As certainly as the one takes place, so certainly, also, must the other ensue. The expression, *baptize with the Holy Ghost*, for overflow therewith, is called forth by the antithesis to the baptism with water. It has its foundation in the passages of the Old Testament which speak of the *pouring out* of the Spirit in the times of the Messiah : Joel ii. 28, “ And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh.” Isa. xliv. 3. He who pours out, is in these passages God ; and, in fact, the baptism with the Holy Ghost is far above the sphere of man—being a Divine prerogative : nowhere in Holy Scripture is there such a declaration with regard to a man. The Berleb. Bibel remarks, with perfect correctness, “ He baptizes in the Holy Ghost—therefore must the Holy Ghost proceed from Him also, and He must be the Son of God.”

Ver. 34. “ And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.”—Instead of the perfect *μεμαρτύρηκα*, we might expect the present, since the Baptist is at this very time uttering his testimony. The present, however, which occurs also in vers. 19, 35, has respect to the moment of beholding. From this the witnessing took its commencement, the Baptist being inwardly summoned and placed on the stand. In the declaration of the Baptist, “ This is the Son of God,” is manifestly echoed the voice from heaven in Matt. iii. 17, *οὐτός ἐστιν ὁ νίος μου ὁ ἀγαπητὸς, ἐν ϕενδόκησα*. That John uses the expression, Son of God, in a profounder sense than the ordinary Jewish theology, is clear from the reference to the pre-existence of Christ in vers. 15, 27, 30,—from the fact, that he recognises in Him “ the Lord” of Malachi, and himself therefore as unworthy to unloose His shoe-latchet,—as Him also in whom, according to Isa. xl. 5, the glory of the Lord is revealed,—and from the office, which he ascribes to Him, of bearing the sin of the world, and baptizing with the Holy Ghost. Even the original passage of the Old Testament, the second Psalm, points us far above the sphere of man,—representing the Son of God absolutely as Him, a trust in whom brings salvation, whose wrath is destruction.

In vers. 35–42 are narrated the events of the third of the seven days,—the third testimony of the Baptist concerning Christ, and the conversions which followed, of John, Andrew, and Peter.

Ver. 35. “Again, the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples.”—He stood, according to some, in readiness for the exercise of his calling; according to others, in expectation of Jesus. So P. Anton: “Thus he began to wait: he stood like a sentry; and two of his disciples, who adhered to him, stood with him on the watch, followed him like chickens, pullets, *pulli*.” The latter supposition is to be preferred. In the case of the prophet, the man of inward influences, whom nothing unexpected can easily meet in the way of his calling, we shall do best to decide on the object from the result,—the rather, since the *πάλιν*, *again*, seems to lead to the conclusion, that John stood in like circumstances. A similar standing occurs in Hab. ii. 1, where the prophet stands on his watch-tower, waiting for the Lord to make Himself known to him.

Ver. 36. “And looking upon Jesus as He walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!”—Jesus walked past, He does not come to the Baptist, as in ver. 29: this He did but once, in order, fulfilling all righteousness, to receive baptism from him. The Baptist also does not step forward to meet Him: there is no conversation between them. Their circles were to be kept at first, and until after the completion of the testimony, as much as possible separate from each other, in order that the harmony between them might present itself all the more as one divinely effected. The Baptist’s testimony to Christ, to which the latter Himself appeals in v. 33, and so also the testimony of Christ in favour of the Baptist, received the greater significance, when each of them went his own way independently of the other. We may not, however, say that they purposely avoided each other in order to guard against the suspicion of a collusion. This would be too unworthy a consideration. We must say rather, that they did not come to each other, because to this they did not feel that Divine impulse which guided them in all their steps; and that this impulse was wanting, because the Divine decorum required that their circles should remain separate for the present, because in such manner the immediate Divine certainty of their action was to be brought

into view.—The Baptist looked upon Jesus. What he says, puts the result of this look into words. “Christ,” says the Berleb. Bibel, “had, without doubt, something kingly and heroic in the eyes of John.” That He was the Lamb of God, was written on His features; and John had the opened eye, so as to be able to read these lines.—“Behold the Lamb of God!” The Berleb. Bibel: “It is as though he already saw Him bearing His cross and moving towards Golgotha.” That the omission of the words, *δαίρων*, etc., presupposes that these are only a commentary on the designation of Christ as the Lamb of God which needed to be given but once, we have already remarked above. If it be so, the Lamb must be a representative, atoning, sacrificial Lamb. The renewed testimony of John has special reference to the two disciples, who are to be regarded at the same time as representatives of the whole circle of John’s disciples. From their conduct in consequence of this testimony, we perceive its object. An express requisition on the two disciples to join Christ, was not necessary. If Christ was the Lamb of God, the desire resulted of itself, in the more thoughtful minds, to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. Rev. xiv. 4. Augustine says: “Habebant illum tanquam agnum: et ille: quid ad me adtenditis? Ego non sum agnus.” It may be said more precisely: John points the disciples from himself to Christ, because in Him appeared, what no one could ever find in the Baptist, the satisfaction of the deepest necessities of the human heart, which can never be satisfied by mere preaching, but can find its home and rest only in a sufficient sacrifice.

Ver. 38. “Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye?”—That Jesus turned “accidentally,” was certainly not in the mind of the Evangelist. In the Spirit He had already seen them follow Him, and had perceived the sincerity of their desire; and this desire He lovingly meets. The question: What seek ye? is not to procure intelligence concerning what is unknown; it is only to commence the conversation, and give them an occasion to make known their wish.—“They said unto Him, Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, Master), where dwellest Thou?” The first word which he spoke to Christ remained so memorable to John, that he gives the address, Rabbi, even in the original language, with a translation added. The words, in themselves indifferent,

have for him a pretium affectionis. From the circumstance, that in John iii. 26, John the Baptist is addressed by his disciples as Rabbi, and that in the time of Christ this mode of address was notoriously very generally in use in relation to human teachers, we might conclude, that it belonged only to the very commencement of the relation of the disciples to Christ, and that it must have ceased so soon as they had attained to any perception of His superhuman nature. But experience does not confirm this hypothesis. The address, Rabbi, is found together with the much more frequent κύριε, *Lord*, in Matthew no less than in John, even to the last times of Christ's life on earth, and a distinction of the times is not to be perceived in this relation. The Apostles use this address at the Transfiguration, Mark ix. 5; after the cursing of the fig-tree, which occurred in the Passion-week, Mark xi. 21; so also John xi. 8, shortly before the Passion. Mary addresses Christ as Rabboni, according to John xx. 16, after the resurrection. Our Lord, far from merely allowing this address, expressly approves it in John xiii. 13, ὑμεῖς φωνεῖτέ με, ὁ διδάσκαλος, καὶ ὁ κύριος· καὶ καλῶς λέγετε, εἰμὶ γάρ: He even claims it exclusively for Himself, Matt. xxiii. 8, ὑμεῖς δὲ μὴ κληθῆτε, ἥβθεῖτε γάρ ἐστιν ὑμῶν ὁ καθηγητής, πάντες δὲ ὑμεῖς ἀδελφοί ἐστε. In fact, this address designates also a relation of believers to Christ which has more than a mere transitory character. “The first attribute,” says Quesnel, “that we must perceive in Him, is, that He is our *Master*, from whom we must learn the way of salvation, that we may walk therein.” From this remark it is at the same time clear, that here this address is most suitable. The Baptist had presented Christ to his disciples as the Lamb of God; but before they could rightly comprehend what this meant, they must choose Him as their Master, and must be instructed by Him. The address, Rabbi, in its Hebrew form, does not occur once in Luke; in the Gospels, it is found most frequently in John, *viz.*, seven times. This is characteristic of the predilection for whatever belonged to his native country, which John retained even in the midst of heathen surroundings, which extended even to the forms of language, and which makes itself known in the Gospel not less than in the Apocalypse, where new formations have proceeded from it, as, *e.g.*, χαλκολίθανον and ἀρμαγεδδών.—The disciples ask, where Christ

lodges, in order to receive from Him an invitation, and to be able to converse with Him in His dwelling. P. Anton: "Therefore they did not wish to speak with Him *passagierement*, but considerately and without interruption."

Ver. 39. "He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day: for it was about the tenth hour."—Come and see, first of all, where I dwell. But the recurrence of *ἔρχου καὶ ἰδε* in the mouth of Philip, ver. 47, who had received the memorable word from the two disciples, and who uses it with reference to the person and character of Jesus; then, also, the use of this expression in Rev. vi. 1, "And I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see,"—and the appearance of Christ, which John is there required to consider,<sup>1</sup>—show that some deeper meaning is contained in these words, that Jesus never requires any to come and see in vain. To this result we are led by two passages of the Old Testament, to which there is here an unmistakeable reference. The first is ver. 5 of Ps. lxvi., composed by David: "Come and see the works of God: He is terrible in His doing toward the children of men;" LXX., δεῦτε καὶ ἰδετε τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Θεοῦ, φοβερὸς ἐν βουλαῖς ὑπὲρ τοὺς νιοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων,—terrible is God's doing even for those to whom it gives salvation; for His *tremenda majestas* makes itself known therein. The words, "Come and see the doings of God," indicate the great privilege of the Church in relation to heathenism, with respect to God in relation to idols. The God of the Church is the only one who appeals to facts, or who can invite His people to come and see. On this first passage is founded the second, ver. 9 of the forty-sixth Psalm, which has reference to the catastrophe under Hezekiah, the great triumph over the Assyrian host: "Come and see the works of the LORD, what desolations He hath made in the earth;"—LXX., δεῦτε καὶ ἰδετε τὰ ἔργα τοῦ κυρίου, ἀ ἔθετο τέρατα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.<sup>2</sup> In

<sup>1</sup> "The words, 'Come and see,' were, according to John i. 39, the second which John, with his companion Andrew, had received from Jesus. They had impressed themselves indelibly on the thoughtful mind of the Apostle. Through him they had probably come to Philip, and here they are heard again."

<sup>2</sup> שׁוֹתָה is, according to the original passage, Ps. lxvi. 5, and Jer. v. 30, better taken in the meaning of *stupenda, mirabilia*, than in the meaning preferred in my Commentary, *desolations*. הַמִּשׁׁׁ occurs in the meaning of

the allusion to these passages in the Psalms, Jesus gives at the same time a gentle hint at His deity,—the Elohim and Jehovah being represented bodily in Him. In a mortal, such an allusion would have been impious.—“And abode with Him that day:” at first, the two only. Then they fetch Peter also. For that which is narrated in vers. 41–43 belongs to the same day. An account of what occurred on the following day, is given in ver. 44. We have here a regular diary. The *day* here is not the civil day, but the day according to the usage of common life, the end of which was either the complete darkness (Gen. i. 5: “And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night;” and ver. 14. Pliny: *Vulgus omne a luce ad tenebras*), or rather, the going to rest. They had so much to discourse with Jesus, that they certainly did not regard the limits set to the day by the arbitrariness of man, but simply remained with Jesus until weak nature asserted its claims. But before the end of the day, they were fully convinced that Jesus was the Christ. This is shown by the word which Andrew addresses to his brother, not only in his own name, but in that also of the other disciple. “*Quam beatum diem duxerunt*,” says Augustine, “*quam beatam noctem? Quis est, qui nobis dicat, quæ audierint illi a Domino?*” Why does not John communicate the contents of that conversation? In substance, it occurred without doubt elsewhere. So John might keep what was said as his secret: he needed not to lay bare the roots of his life.—“For it was about the tenth hour;” *viz.*, when they came to Him, not when they went away. For the day did not end with the tenth hour. John mentions the hour here, because for him personally, it brought about the decision of his life; but at the same time, also, because it was in a certain degree the natal hour of the Church. The hour of a remarkable event is mentioned also in iv. 6. It cannot be doubtful what the tenth hour is. “However much,” says Ideler, in his *Handb. der Chronologie* i. S. 84, “the Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, diverged from each other in the epoch of the civil day, they were as uniform in their reckoning of the hours. The whole year through, they divided the natural day *stupor* in Deut. xxviii. 37, in parallelism with *שָׁמַד*. The verb *שָׁמַד* denotes, to be disturbed spiritually, no less than outwardly, to be terrified, to be astonished.

and the night into twelve hours, which they reckoned from the rising of the sun to its setting, and from its setting to its rising; so that noon came at the beginning of the seventh hour of the day, and midnight at the beginning of the seventh hour of the night.” The same reckoning of the hours is found everywhere in the New Testament. It was, therefore, four o’clock in the afternoon. It has been held, that a period of two hours was too short for the first interview between Jesus and His first disciples; and that the words, “They abode with Him that day,” indicate a longer duration of the interview. But we should not allow ourselves to be led by such a consideration into unfounded assumptions, with respect to the reckoning of the hours. The correct solution of the difficulty is, that the civil day ended with the twelfth hour, but that here is meant the day according to the usage of common life, which extended to the time of going to rest.

Ver. 40. “One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother.”—Andrew is repeatedly designated in the Gospel history as the brother of Simon Peter, because the latter was the more distinguished, ranking higher among the brothers, and the Rock among the Apostles. That the other disciple was John, was recognised even in the age of the Church Fathers; *e.g.*, by Chrysostom. It is favourable to this view, that the Evangelist elsewhere loves to conceal himself, cf. xx. 2, not from a general shyness of coming forward personally,—in the Apocalypse he asserts himself most expressly as John, and so also in the Epistles,—but from fear that, by making his personality prominent, he might injure the historic objectivity; and thus for a reason which applied only to the Gospel, by which the *first* Apostle among the Evangelists was not less guided, and which also in the historical writings of the Old Testament effected the retirement of the personality of the authors. The readers are to be entirely immersed in the facts, and to turn away their eyes from the instrument of the report, who is himself conscious that his person and his name have nothing to do with the matter. It is for the same reason that Moses speaks of himself in the third person. Moreover, the exactness of the report, which extends even to the mention of the hour, leads us to presume a personal participation of the narrator in the fact: only on such an hypothesis is it explained

that the name is not mentioned, while all the others, Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathanael, are called by their names. In Matt. iv., John, together with Andrew and Peter, was of the number of those to whom the call was first made, “Come, and I will make you fishers of men”—a call which presupposes that he had already sometime before entered into the relation of a disciple to Jesus; and, finally, according to ver. 42, the other disciple stood in a confidential, fraternal relation to Peter, and John is the only one with whom such a relation is historically attested. Lampe justly remarks: “Admirable is the modesty in which John covers with silence the preference, of which he might have boasted according to the flesh, that he was among the first, and perhaps the first of the Apostles, to obtain access to Jesus.”

Ver. 41. “He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ”—With respect to the word *εὗρισκει*, Bengel says, “Cum festivissima illorum dierum novitate pulchre congruit verbum: invenit, his sæpius posuit.” In that Andrew immediately fetches his brother, says Calvin, may be perceived the nature of faith, which does not retain the light within the breast, and thereby smother it, but scatters it on all sides. In the words, “he first findeth” (properly, *he as the first* of the two disciples, *πρώτος*, not *πρώτον*, as some critical authorities have), it is intimated that the other disciple also was a friend of Peter, and went in another direction to seek him. This refers to John. From the intimate relation in which he stood to Peter, it is a matter of course that he would not allow Andrew to go alone. The words *τὸν ἰδιον* are not added without purpose, since they are never put idly, or as a mere periphrasis of the possessive pronoun. They indicate that the other disciple, in a wider sense, was also the brother of Peter. They designate, as it were, the private brotherhood, the bodily in contrast to the intellectual and spiritual; as David speaks of his *brother* Jonathan; and as John in the Revelation, i. 9, designates as brother, him to whom he writes. John was the brother of Peter in Christ; but not this alone, he was also his brother in hearty friendship. Quite similarly stands *ἰδιος* in v. 18, where the Jews are angry with Jesus, because He *πατέρα ἰδιον ἔλεγε τὸν Θεόν*. As there, *own Father* designates Father in the proper sense, so here, *own*

*brother.*<sup>1</sup> According to Meyer, John did not with Andrew seek and find Peter, but his own brother James: but for this the hint is too slight; it is necessary to supply too much. Against this view also is *ἴδιος*, which then stands to no purpose, and *εὐρήκαμεν*, we have found, which intimates a common relation of the two to Peter.—Simon was also at the Jordan. He belonged, as the address of Andrew to him shows, to the circle of those who were waiting for redemption in Israel, Luke ii. 38; and his fiery spirit had drawn him into proximity to the Baptist, who formed the centre of this expectation. “*We have found.*” Andrew did not need to name to Peter the companion of his discovery. It could be no other than he who was most intimately connected with the brothers in *seeking* the Redeemer, and in hearty longing for Him. Bengel: “*εὐρήκαμεν*, magnum et lætum *εύρημα*, 40 propemodum sæculis a mundo exspectatum. Ex Johanne didicerant in proximo esse.” The Hebrew, *Messiah*, is found only here and in iv. 25, both times with the Greek translation. In i. 20, 25, John renders it in the declarations of the Baptist, without further explanation, by *ὁ Χριστός*. Here he is moved to give the Hebrew word, with the Greek interpretation appended, by the deep interest which the event possessed for him personally, and also by the significance which it had for the Church. He wishes to reproduce the occurrence as exactly as possible. *Messiah*, *מָשִׁיחַ*, means The Anointed. The anointing in the Old Testament, occurring as a symbolical transaction or emblem, is always the designation of the impartation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as they are shared by all the servants of God in His kingdom, who are by the possession of these very gifts characteristically separated from the rich of this world. This meaning is very apparent in the narrative of the anointing of Saul, 1 Sam. x. 1, and of David, xvi. 13, 14. The kings of Israel were called The Anointed by way of eminence, because for their important office, which was the channel of grace for the whole people—Lam. iv. 20; Zech. iv.—they received an especially rich measure of Divine grace. From them the expression was transferred to the King absolutely,—Him, in whom the idea

<sup>1</sup> Lampe: Indigitare vult Johannes, licet ipse quoque Petro tam familiaris fuerit et licet eadem cupiditate fuerit incensus gaudium suum aliis communicandi, Andreæ tamen hanc felicitatem contigisse, ut ille prior potuerit quæ crediderat loqui.

of kingship was to be perfectly realized. The equipment by the Spirit without measure, which was imparted to His types to a limited degree, is in Isa. xi. rendered prominent as the essential characteristic of the great King of the future. The historical commentary to the name is formed by the occurrence at the Baptism,—the fact, that then the Spirit descended on Jesus, and abode upon Him, vers. 32, 33. In the Old Testament, the Redeemer appears twice under this name: first in ver. 2 of Ps. ii., composed by David; and in Dan. ix. 25, “unto the Messiah the Prince,”—the passage in which is determined the time of the appearance of Christ, and upon which by preference was founded the expectation then entertained with so much confidence, that the coming of Christ was near at hand. How current the name then was among the Jews, is clear from the fact that, according to iv. 25, it had passed over to the Samaritans, although these did not acknowledge the writings of the Old Testament from which its use had originally proceeded. It is also characteristic in favour of the naturalization of the name, that it appears in iv. 25, without the article, ὅτι Μεσσίας ἔρχεται; therefore, directly as the *nomen proprium* of the Redeemer. In imitation of this is the mere Χριστός here, instead of ὁ Χριστός. The formula, ὁ ἐστι μεθερμηνευόμενος, is found first in Matt. i. 23; then in Mark v. 41, xv. 22, 34. In John only here. Luke uses it in Acts iv. 36.

Ver. 42. “And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, He said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation,<sup>1</sup> Peter.”—On the words, Thou art Simon the son of Jona, P. Anton remarks, in harmony with many other of the older expositors: “A testimony to the omniscience of Jesus. He had never before known or spoken to either Simon or his father.” But this is improbable. It is likely that he who brought him to Jesus also introduced him to Jesus. What Simon is, is said rather only to connect with it what he shall be. The commonplace names, which he had hitherto borne, Simon the son of Jona, stand in contrast to the significant ones which he now receives. In the Old Testament also, when a new name is given, the old name is generally placed before it, in order to

<sup>1</sup> John purposely changes the forms. Cf. vers. 39, 42. The present one recurs in ix. 7. It never occurs elsewhere in the New Testament

render the contrast the more striking. So in Gen. xxxii. 28, “ And He said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed :” then Gen. xvii. 5, “ Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham,”—passages which appertain here the more, since Jesus here evidently, in the giving of names, takes the position which Jehovah had occupied under the Old Covenant, and has in view these Old Testament namings. Cf. besides, Matt. xvi. 17, 18, where Jesus in like manner opposes to each other the new name, Peter, and the old one, Simon Bar-Jona. Instead of *Iωνᾶ*, is found in several critical authorities *Iωάνου*, which Lachmann prefers; in others, *Iωάννου*. If we go on the common hypothesis, that in Matt. xvi. the name Jonas is identical with that of the prophet Jonah, יְהוֹנָה, dove, we shall reject these readings without further discussion, and must explain their origin in this way,—that the less bold copyists made *Iωάνης* out of *Iωνᾶς*, in order to approximate it more to the better known *Iωάννης*, which the bolder ones directly wrote. A contradiction between Matthew and John with respect to the name of Peter’s father is scarcely to be presumed; and the numerous and important testimonies in favour of the reading Jona, receive by this consideration increased importance. But the hypothesis is subject to well-grounded suspicions; and from these it seems highly probable, that the name Jona in Matthew has nothing to do with the name of the prophet, but is rather a mere abbreviation of the name יְהוֹחָנָן. 1. It is a striking fact, that the name Jonah never occurs elsewhere in the whole of the Old Testament. This is of the more significance, since there were other names of prophets—Habakkuk, Malachi, Haggai—which were withdrawn from more general use,—a circumstance which is to be explained from the fact, that these names were not such as were given to the respective persons at their birth, but were sacred and official names, which they afterwards assumed. The name Jonah, *dove*, was also excellently adapted for such a sacred use. 2. It would not presumably be otherwise, than that so long a name as Jehochanan should undergo many abbreviations, the rather as this name was particularly frequent,—there are a whole multitude of Jehochanans in the Old Testament. And we really find

such abbreviations. In 2 Chron. xxviii. 12, the name Jehochanan is rendered in the LXX. by Ἰωάνης; in Luke iii. 30, the name Ἰωνᾶ is without doubt to be traced to Jehochanan; even Ἰωνᾶ itself is to be found in 2 Kings xxv. 23. According to this, we must in Matt. xvi. alter the accent, and suppose that the name of Simon's father has nothing to do with that of the prophet Jonah. Whether in John the name was written Ἰωνᾶ, as in Matthew, or whether John used Ἰωάνου, as coming nearer to the original form of the name, may be left undecided.—Jesus does not say to Simon: Thou *art* Peter, as He says to Nathanael, Behold an Israelite, etc.; but, Thou shalt be called Peter; thou shalt in the future make thyself known as such. Calvin: “*Christus Simoni nomen imponit, non, ut fieri solet inter homines, ex preterito aliquo eventu, vel ex eo, quod jam cernitur: sed quia Petrum facturus ipsum erat.*” There was certainly already in the natural gifts of Peter a basis for that, which he was to become through God's grace. By the rock, נֶגֶב, is here to be understood *firmness*. Cf. Ezek. iii. 9, “As an adamant, harder than flint (rock), have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks;” and the contrast of rock and sand in Matt. vii. 24–26. At the time when John wrote, this prophecy had already been fully verified. Peter had already manifested his rock-like nature, even to a martyr's death. The fall of Peter is no instance to the contrary. He would not have been led into so severe a temptation, if he had not had the power, though yielding at first, to sustain it. Our Lord expressly predicts, that the nature of the rock will be verified again immediately after the fall. Luke xxii. 32, καὶ σὺ ποτὲ ἐπιστρέψες στήριξον τὸν ἀδελφούς σου. He who is to strengthen and confirm his brethren, must himself be distinguished above them by firmness and character. The temptation of Peter presupposes rather his rock-like nature. He was to be freed from the shadow, purified from the stains which consort with such an idiosyncrasy,—from self-confidence, want of humility, over-hasty advance, and uncharitable judgments. As to the rest, this bestowal of a name stands in a like relation to that which took place under the Old Covenant with regard to Abraham, Isaac, Israel, Josiah, and Korah. Jesus does here that which Jehovah did under the Old Dispensation.—We have still to take into

view the relation of our passage to Matt. iv. 18–22. In the general, Luther has already correctly determined this: “ John the Evangelist does not speak of the calling of the Apostles, but that they had joined themselves to Christ merely as companions, and had gone about with Him, while He in a friendly manner associated with the people. . . . They went away again, and returned to their homes, when they had formed a friendship and acquaintance with Him; they had not yet become Christ’s disciples, or been called thereto. But after this, Christ comes to the Sea of Galilee, journeys about there, and calls them to be His Apostles. . . . John does not this time speak of the calling, but only of the intelligence that Christ was an affable man, who made friendships with every one, so that the people gladly followed Him. But Matthew speaks only of the calling of the Apostles, and passes by their acquaintance, of which John speaks.” It is objected, that it is clear from ii. 2, 12, that even here the disciples were called to a constant following of Christ. But we are not justified in generalizing, without further reason, what is there said. The passages do not exclude the supposition, that the disciples at the same time applied themselves to their calling, and went about with Christ. It is not asserted in Matt. iv. 18–22, that the disciples from that time forward gave up entirely their lower calling, and acted constantly with Jesus, or under His command. This has been assumed only because the reference of this passage to Ezek. xlviij. has been misunderstood,—the prophecy being said to be here, as it were, represented scenically. In order to indicate that they were comprehended in its fulfilment, the disciples must have immediately relinquished their employment, in which we find them occupied again afterwards, even still after the resurrection. According to the prophecy of Ezekiel, one of the most remarkable of the Old Testament, the bad water of the Dead Sea, the world, is to be healed by the water which comes from the sanctuary. “ And it shall come to pass,” it is said in vers. 9, 10, “ that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers (*marg.* two rivers, *equivalent to*, great flood) shall come, shall live; and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed.—And it shall come to pass, that fishers shall stand upon it (the Dead Sea, the symbol of the world dead and ruined

in sins), from Engedi even unto En-Eglaim ; they shall be a place to spread forth nets : their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many." On this prophecy are based not only the occurrence of the text, but Peter's miraculous draught of fishes, connected with it, according to Luke, in the interpretation of which our Lord says, "Henceforth thou shalt catch men," Luke v. 10 ; Peter's miraculous draught of fishes after the resurrection, John xxi. ; and the parable of the net which was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind. Moreover, Matt. iv. 18-22, far from contradicting what is here related, in various relations presupposes it. In John, it is not yet the apostolic ministry or calling which is the subject of narration, but singly and only the entering into a personal relation, the relation of the disciple to the Master, ver. 39. This latter must necessarily have preceded the calling to the ministry, which alone is spoken of in Matthew. The address to Simon Peter and Andrew, δεῦτε ὥπλοι μου καὶ ποιήσω ὑμᾶς ἀλιεῖς ἀνθρώπων, would have been an adventurous one, if a relation had not been previously entered into between them and Christ. On this point John's Gospel is supplementary. That the connection was not then first formed, is also clear from the readiness with which John and James leave the ship and their father and follow Christ.—Σίμων τὸν λεγόμενον Πέτρον : the key to the origin of this surname is not given by Matthew ; and yet such a key is requisite. In Matt. xvi. 18, Simon is already Peter. Finally, in this also is shown a friendly agreement, that these three disciples, who are here first called to follow Christ, are there also those to whom the call is first made to the apostolic ministry,—there being with them only James, the brother of John, whom we may suppose to have been his inseparable companion. It is very natural that those who were first called as disciples, should also be first chosen to be fishers of men, and that the Lord should choose them just at the time when He wishes to announce the impending fulfilment of the prophecy of Ezekiel.

In vers. 43-51 follow the events of the *fourth* of the seven remarkable days, the calling of Philip and Nathanael.

Ver. 43. "The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow Me."

Ver. 44. "Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter."—By the word *ἡθέλησεν* it is intimated that Jesus had not yet commenced His journey, but was designing to enter on it. The real departure followed immediately on the calling of Philip. The latter was, doubtless, already prepared by Andrew and Peter. This seems to be already indicated in the purpose of the notice in ver. 44. If a connection had not thus been formed between Philip and Christ, the former could have made nothing of the words of Christ, "Follow Me," with which he was immediately greeted. Philip also had certainly made a pilgrimage to the Baptist at the Jordan. Andrew and Peter had communicated to him the glad tidings, and had occasioned his being in the place, from which, after the address received, they were to set out with Jesus on their return to Galilee. The formula, *ἀκολούθει μοι*, refers, in the first place, to an external accession. This is shown with especial clearness by Matt. ix. 9, where, after Jesus has said to Matthew, *ἀκολούθει μοι*, it is said, *καὶ ἀναστὰς ἡκολούθησεν αὐτῷ*: cf. Luke v. 28. The formula stands also of a spiritual following, in Matt. xvi. 24; John viii. 12, xii. 26, xxi. 19, 22 (there of the same occurrence); Rev. xiv. 4. In the Old Testament, the phrase, *to walk after*, is used repeatedly of the relation to God and to idols; e.g., Deut. xiii. 4, "Ye shall walk after the **LORD** your God, and fear Him, and keep His commandments, and obey His voice, and ye shall serve Him, and cleave unto Him:" cf. Deut. i. 36; Num. xxxii. 11, 12. Here, in our text, the *ἀκολούθει μοι* refers chiefly to the external following; for it stands in unmistakable reference to the preceding words, "He would go forth into Galilee." We find the first disciples in the suite of Christ in ii. 11, 12. Yet, behind the requisition of a bodily following is hidden that of a spiritual, which is the only object of the external following. On this account, it is not required by the *ἀκολούθει μοι*, that the external following be an entirely uninterrupted one. It is only commanded in so far as it is requisite for the object aimed at. Philip, as has been remarked, already knew of Christ, but the *ἀκολούθει μοι* gave the decisive turn to his life. Jesus proved Himself to be the searcher of hearts, who knew what was in man, ii. 25, by speaking the words, *ἀκολούθει μοι*, on the first meeting with one personally unknown to Him. At the time when John wrote, this judgment on the personality

of Philip had already proved itself to be well founded. It must be remarked, that the *ἡθέλησεν ἐξελθεῖν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν* here, refers back to *τότε παραγίνεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ τῆς Γαλιλαίας ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰορδάνην* in Matt. iii. 13. And further, that there were indeed two Bethsaidas, one in Galilee, and one on the east side of the Jordan, Luke ix. 10; but that it was unnecessary to designate this one as that in Galilee, because this was generally known as the home of Peter.

Ver. 45. “Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”—It is not said *where* Philip found Nathanael. But since the fact belongs to the day of the departure for Galilee (Lampe, with perfect correctness, says, *Inventionem hanc eodem die contigisse, quo Philippus vocatus erat, nexus temporum in nostro Evangelista requirit*), we must not suppose that Philip met Nathanael first in his home at Cana (xxi. 2, *Ναθαναὴλ ὁ ἀπὸ Κανᾶ τῆς Γαλιλαίας*). The expression also, *Philip findeth Nathanael*, intimates a meeting at a strange place, not on a visit to his home. And the fig-tree, in ver. 48, can scarcely have been one which shaded Nathanael’s own dwelling; for then the words of Jesus, in ver. 48, might have proceeded from a coincidence, and would not have made so deep an impression on Nathanael. It is probable that Nathanael also, belonging to the circle of those aroused by John, was returning home from the Jordan. He had set out before Jesus and his companions, and had halted somewhere on the way, aside from the road. Philip, who knew his manner of travelling, leaving his own company, seeks him there, in order to communicate to him the glad tidings, which he could not keep to himself, so deeply was his heart moved by them. The identity of Nathanael with the Apostle Bartholomew is now generally assumed. It rests on the following grounds: The calling of Nathanael follows here in the midst of those of real Apostles. He likewise appears surrounded by Apostles in xxi. 1, 2. The three first Evangelists never mention Nathanael; John never mentions Bartholomew. In John, Nathanael appears in connection with Philip; in the three first Gospels, Bartholomew is named together with Philip, and in such a manner that Philip comes first (cf. Matt. x. 3). Philip and Bartholomew are connected together in a pair, and

are preceded by the same Apostles who are here called before Philip and Nathanael, with the addition only of James: Simon, Andrew—James, John—Philip, Bartholomew. An argument for their identity is furnished also by Acts i. 13, where Bartholomew is connected with Matthew. The reason for this divergence from the lists of the Apostles in the Gospels, even in that of Luke himself, vi. 14, cf. Mark iii. 18, can scarcely be other than this, that the real name of Bartholomew, Nathanael, has the same meaning as the name of Matthew,—both names corresponding to the Greek Theodore, Gift of God. The original connection of Bartholomew with Philip is perceptible even here. Bartholomew is separated from Philip by the single insertion of Thomas. If we add to this, that Bartholomew, son of Tholmai, is not a real proper name, there can be no doubt with respect to the identity. It is certainly not, however, by chance that the thoughtful John uses the more significant name, which is verified even here. The reason why the first Evangelists did not make use of it is afforded by the fact, that already in the Old Testament seven different persons bear the name Nathanael. So frequent a name appeared insufficient to characterize a person to be thus indicated in the lists of the Apostles.—In Philip's designation of Jesus, as Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, have written, we have probably an echo of the instruction which Jesus had imparted to His two first disciples, in their long conversation with Him, ver. 39, and which had come from them to Philip. That also may, perhaps, be said of this conversation which is found in Luke xxiv. 27, *καὶ ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ Μωϋσέως καὶ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν προφητῶν, διηρμήνευεν αὐτοῖς ἐν πάσαις ταῖς γραφαῖς τὰ περὶ αὐτοῦ.* As Jesus reproaches the Jews, in John v. 46, *εἰ ἐπιστεύετε Μωϋσῆ, ἐπιστεύετε ἀν ἐμού περὶ γὰρ ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἔγραψε,* it might be expected that with His disciples also He would employ this means of conviction before all others. Philip (and he, whom his declaration regards) had, doubtless, principally in view the passage from Moses, in Deut. xviii. 15–19. For, except in this passage, a personal Messianic prophecy is contained only in Gen. xl ix. 10; and the tokens of the Shiloh were much less evident in Jesus than those of the Prophet. We are led to this passage also by the prominence of Moses, which is much less in Gen. xl ix. 10, and that of the *law.* Finally, this very

passage was at that time, as a rule, interpreted of the Messiah, and attracted much attention. Cf. remarks on ver. 21.—The plural, *we* have found, shows that Philip, as a believing confessor, knows himself to be a part of a whole. Philip's designation of Jesus, as of Nazareth, the son of Joseph, is said, according to the current view, to show that he is not yet acquainted with Jesus as the Son of God,<sup>1</sup> and knows nothing of the birth in Bethlehem. Anton, proceeding on this view, remarks : “Jesus was neither Joseph's son, nor born in Nazareth. What was lacking to these people in knowledge, soon shows itself ; but yet the Lord does not cast them off.” But this view is not necessary : Matthew also regards Jesus as the son of Joseph, in tracing His descent from David through Joseph ; and Jesus must indeed be Joseph's son, because otherwise the prophecy of the Old Testament, which traces His descent so expressly from David, would err in an essential point. Joseph, if not the natural, was yet the foster-father of Christ, through whom the latter was received and adopted into the family of David. That Jesus was the son of Joseph, can only be misapprehended, when paternity is very superficially restricted to the mere natural relation. Jesus was “of Nazareth,” notwithstanding His birth in Bethlehem. Here, where the chief concern was with the external particulars, the characterization of the person, the best manner of excluding any error with respect to the same, neither the conception of Jesus through the Holy Ghost, and His hidden deity, came into consideration, nor the transient residence of His parents in Bethlehem. But if the words do not necessitate the current view, we may fairly have some hesitation in adopting it. Philip can scarcely have considered Jesus as the *mere* son of Joseph ; for he was doubtless one of the circle of the disciples of the Baptist, who proclaimed so expressly the superhuman nature of the Messiah ; he had just received the instruction of Andrew and John, whom Christ had already, by His second word, ἐρχεσθε καὶ ὢδετε, pointed to His Divine nature ; and to confirm this in them was, according to all analogies, the principal object of His conversation with them ; and the ἐρχονται καὶ ὢδε, which Philip

<sup>1</sup> Beza : hæret adhuc in ipsis elementis, quomodo Messias esse potest Jesus et filius Joseph ? Si enim filius esset Joseph, in peccatis conceptus et natus esset et per consequens non potest nos a peccatis nostris liberare.

addresses to Nathanael, in ver. 46, in reference to that *ἐρχεσθε* καὶ ἵδετε of the Saviour, shows that he had received into his heart the instruction which had come to him externally. On the second point, the incorrectness of the current view is still more evident. The “prophets,” to whom Philip so expressly appeals, predict so distinctly and plainly the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem, and this point was so clearly set forth in the Jewish theology of the time (cf. Matt. ii. 4, 5), that Philip could not possibly have expressed the conviction, that in Jesus he had found the Messiah, if he held Nazareth to be His birth-place, and not merely His place of residence, the starting-point of the journey in which he was then engaged.

Ver. 46. “And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.”—The remark is founded on a misapprehension of the words of Nathanael, that he, and with him the public opinion, held the town to be *immoral*,—as Bengel says: “itaque multi ibi erant improbi.” It is not a good man, but a good thing, which is spoken of,—a grand appearance, which is to bring salvation to God’s people,—such a good thing, as the Son of God, the King of Israel. Cf. Isa. lii. 7: “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of *good!*” ; Rom. x. 15, τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένων τὰ ἀγαθά. Nathanael goes on the prejudice of the natural man, that greatness must have a natural foundation. It is only a spirit divinely instructed which expects greatness immediately from God, unconnected with human greatness, and can from the heart adopt the words of Ps. cxiii. 5–7, “Who is like unto the LORD our God, who raises Himself so high, and looks so low (has pleasure in the poor, lowly, and despised)? He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dung-hill.” On the above disposition of the natural man rests the prophetic announcement, that before the advent of the Saviour, God will extirpate all natural greatness and dignity from Israel, in order that the glory of His mercy may be undiminished. Christology ii. p. 126. Now, in Nazareth, the small despised place in despised Galilee (vii. 52), hallowed by no event in the past, unnamed in the Old Testament, or in Josephus, probably not founded till after the return from the exile, perhaps

still burdened with a special disgrace, there was nothing which could appropriately form a natural basis for the greatness of the Messiah ; he who would have such a basis, must necessarily turn his gaze to Jerusalem, which at least afforded splendid ruins of former grandeur. If the Messiah must, according to the prophecy, be born in Bethlehem, yet He might not go from thence to the wretched town of Nazareth ; He must, like His ancestor David, proceed to Jerusalem. Moreover, what Nathanael says is not a serious objection, but only the expression of wonder at the strange ways of God, which is put into this form : he does not assert that no good thing can come out of Nazareth ; he only makes the query. P. Anton : “ He asks, therefore, not that he may insist upon it, but because he has still an *offensiunculum*. Can indeed anything good come out of Nazareth ? That would be something strange. There is a great difference between such prejudices as rest merely on a *statu calamitoso*, and such as are found in a *statu malitioso*, when the man is *malitieux*, has a *dolum* in them, and on this account seeks a *præjudicium*, that he may by a pretence free himself from Christ. This is malice ; and such malice Nathanael had not.” Luther : “ Nathanael is a good silly sheep ; he says, What good thing can come out of Nazareth ? If it came from Jerusalem, or from any other great city of Judæa, one might believe in it.” Luther goes on to show how Christ’s procedure, in the first calling of His disciples, was in contradiction to this prejudice of Nathanael : “ He goes about the Jordan, through the wretched towns and villages, and picks from the whole people of Israel, those whom He regards as the best, and who are well-pleasing to Him, that they may serve Him in His kingdom. He collects together poor fishermen, and good thick blockheads ; He does not summon to Him the mighty ; as though He could not otherwise establish His kingdom, without having such mean people. And He does all this, that those who are high, wise, and mighty in the world may not think that it was they alone who belonged to Christ’s kingdom, and trample the others under their feet ; but He wished to establish and found a kingdom and rule which should stand purely in God’s grace and mercy. Thus is the kingdom built up and preserved hitherto. He does not ask much after great kings, and mighty lords, and great substance, which is so much esteemed else-

where on earth."—We have already remarked, that the answer of Philip, Come and see, has reference to the words of Christ in ver. 39.

Ver. 47. "Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!"—Jesus, in speaking of such as are Israelites *indeed*, "divides the people of Israel into two bands," as Luther says. In such a separation, the Old Testament had already preceded. In Ps. lxxiii. 1 it is said: "Only good is God to Israel, to those who are of pure heart." "The limiting clause, 'such as are of pure heart,' shows that by Israel, the Psalmist understands only the election, the true Israelites, to the exclusion of the false seed, Isa. lvii. 4,—the souls who, according to the expression of the law, are cut off from their people, even although they are found to be outwardly living in the midst of them."\* According to Ps. xxiv. 6, those only are Jacob who seek the face of the Lord, those who lead a life of prayer. In the New Testament, this separation branches out extensively. According to Rom. ix. 6, they are not all Israel who are of Israel; according to Rom. ii. 28, 29, the character of a "Jew" consists not in outward circumcision, but necessarily involves the circumcision of the heart; in 1 Cor. x. 18, the Jews of the present are designated as Jews according to the flesh, in contrast to the true spiritual Israel, ὁ Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ Θεοῦ, Gal. vi. 16, which continues its existence from the Old Dispensation in the Christian Church. That which is corporeal can have only a subordinate meaning for the people of God: their being is in the region of the spiritual. That Ἰουδαῖος might stand here instead of Ἰσραηλίτης, is shown by Rom. ii. 28, 29, and by Ps. xxiv. 6, where those who do not seek God are excluded from *Jacob*. The distinction of the true and the false finds place in all the designations of the people of God. But, of course, Ἰσραηλίτης is the most suitable designation here. The name of Israel was given to the father of the race, by God Himself, in consequence of his being proved to possess the peculiar character of the people of God, which is, to wrestle and prevail with God in prayer. It became, in consequence of this origin, the highest, the peculiarly theological name, of the people. It was, therefore,

\* Hengstenberg on the Psalms. Translation, pub. by T. and T. Clark, vol. ii. p. 403.

that name which contained in itself a protest against those who made claim to the prerogatives of the people of God, without having any other connection with them than that of natural descent.—In what the nature of a true Israelite consists, and on account of which Nathanael is designated as such, is indicated by our Lord in the words, ἐν φῳ δόλος οὐκ ἔστι. We are not to introduce into these words anything whereby Nathanael is excluded from the Lamb of God which bears the sin of the world. We should, moreover, anticipate that the Saviour has reference to some passage of the Old Testament, in which freedom from δόλος is represented as pertaining to the peculiar nature of the people of God. Both claims are satisfied by the supposition, that Jesus has here specially in view Ps. xxxii. 2, where he is pronounced blessed, “in whose spirit there is no guile.” LXX. μακάριος ἀνὴρ, φῳ οὐ μὴ λογίσηται κύριος ἀμαρτίαν, οὐδέ ἔστιν ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ δόλος. “The succeeding context contains an explanation, as to where it is that the guile lies. As the results of it, we find mention made of ‘keeping silence,’ of ‘not making known,’ of ‘hiding iniquity,’ and of ‘not confessing transgression.’ This guile, this want of inward truth, which denies, extenuates, excuses, or seeks to apologize, is inconsistent with the blessedness of forgiveness extolled by David, which is vouchsafed only for sins acknowledged and confessed.”\* If δόλος is thus taken, the declaration of the text is in striking connection with the pointing of the Baptist to the Lamb of God who bears the sins of the world. Freedom from guile in this sense, does not render the forgiveness of sin superfluous, but is the condition of obtaining it. Δόλος in this sense, was then the fundamental disease of the people. Nathanael, as one in whom was no δόλος, was the contrary of the Pharisees, who, by exercising δόλος, concealed their true character from themselves and others, as ὑποκριταί, Matt. vi. 16, cf. Matt. xxiii. 27, ὅτι παρομοιάζετε τάφοις κεκονιαμένοις, οἵτινες ἔξωθεν μὲν φαίνονται ὡραῖοι, ἔσωθεν δὲ γέμοντιν ὁστέων νεκρῶν καὶ πάσῃς ἀκαθαρσίᾳ. The guile is known by this, that one justifies himself in opposition to the real state of his heart, Luke xvi. 15. The publican was free from guile, when he said, God be merciful to me a sinner; the Pharisee was full of guile, when

\* Hengstenberg on the Psalms. Translation, pub. by T. and T. Clark, vol. i. p. 514.

he said, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men.<sup>1</sup> Lampe correctly remarks, that Jesus wished at the same time, “characterem hunc veri Israelismi statim tum ab initio discipulis suis inculcare in æstate tam perverso.” By recognising with fixed certainty this hidden quality of heart in Nathanael, which can be imitated so naturally by hypocrites, Jesus proved Himself to be the searcher of hearts, for the consolation of all upright, and the terror of all impure souls. Quesnel : “The light of Jesus Christ penetrates everything. It is a consolation to the simple, that He knows the uprightness of their heart; and it must be a terror to the double and false heart, that the duplicity and arts of their spirit cannot be hidden from Him.”

Ver. 48. “Nathanael saith unto Him, Whence knowest Thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.”—In the question of Philip is already seen the dawning recognition of the superhuman nature of Jesus. The latter did not answer the question directly, but by the presentation of a fact, from which the answer might be derived. That His declaration did not proceed from human, physiognomical and psychological acuteness, is shown by the circumstance, that He proves Himself to be acquainted with a situation of Nathanael which He could not have known at all in a human manner. When Philip called Nathanael, he chanced to be just then under a fig-tree. The article stands generically, to distinguish the fig-tree from any other kind of tree. Nathanael was on his journey from the Jordan to Cana. The fig-tree stood without doubt by the way, ἐπὶ τῆς ὁδοῦ, Matt. xxi. 19, and served him for a resting-place. It has been incorrectly concluded, from ver. 30, that ὅντα ἵππο τὴν συκῆν does not belong to φωνήσαι, but to εἶδόν σε. That Jesus saw Nathanael under the fig-tree, remains true, even if the words ὅντα ἵππο τὴν συκῆν are taken with the preceding. This, however, is necessary, because, otherwise, the time when

<sup>1</sup> Augustine makes some excellent remarks on the words, “in whom there is no guile.” He says among other things : Si dolus in illo non erat, sanabilem illum judicavit medicus, non sanum.—Quomodo dolus in illo non erat? Si peccator est, fatetur se peccatorem. Si enim peccator est et justum se dicit, dolus est in ore ipsius. Ergo in Nathanaele confessionem peccati laudavit, non judicavit non esse peccatorem. . . . Multi Pharisæi, qui abundabant peccatis, justos se dicebant, et dolum afferebant, per quem sanari non poterant.

Nathanael was under the fig-tree would not be exactly determined, and yet the determination of the moment was a necessary part of the case. Nathanael was under the fig-tree when Philip called him. Jesus saw him there before he received information of Him through Philip. His look went in advance of His messenger. This must have struck Philip in the highest degree, and have opened his heart to the impression of the Divine majesty, which was radiated from the whole personality of Jesus. Quesnel: “A beginning of grace, which may appear small in the eyes of men, is capable of drawing us entirely to God, if He spreads abroad His light and His love in the heart.” Nathanael knew from the instruction of Philip, that Jesus declared Himself to be the Son of God; and the present fact must have reminded him of Ps. cxxxix. 1-3, “O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising; Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou remarkest my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.” To many expositors, the fact, as it lies before us, has been inconvenient, and they have subtilized about it, in order to bring it into harmony with their presuppositions. The *seeing* here, seems to them too gross: they substitute for it an internal perception. Even Bengel remarks: “Admonetur Nathanael de cogitationibus, quas tum habuerit vere Israeliticas et a dolo immunes.” And Lücke says: “What astonishes him is only this, that Jesus, by a look from a distance, has inwardly known him.” But there is nothing at all said of an internal perception. Lücke himself says: “*εἶδον*, according to the regular usage of the New Testament, also has the meaning of *seeing*, not of *knowing*.” No one will venture to assert, with Meyer, “A common Jew Jesus would not have seen.” Even the prophecies of the Old Testament afford analogies to *seeing* in the most common sense. Samuel condescends so low as to make discoveries to Saul concerning his lost asses, 1 Sam. ix. 20, x. 2, and concerning other, in themselves, unimportant circumstances, x. 3, 4, which have their significance only as *signs*, to render him willing to follow the authority of the prophet in important matters. Luther recognised fully the correct point of view, representing Nathanael as saying to Christ: “Since Thou hast seen me sitting under the fig-tree, Thou must be able to do more.”

Ver. 49. “Nathanael answered and saith unto Him, Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel.”—Though the fact was so trifling in appearance, it yet formed a sufficient basis for the confession of Nathanael, and he would have belonged to the number of those whom the Lord designates, in Luke xxiv. 25, as *βραδεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ τοῦ πιστεύειν*, if he had not by this means attained to such a confession. In itself, such a supernatural intelligence might certainly have dwelt even in a prophet. The prophets are not called seers without cause. But here the declarations of Jesus Himself are added to those of the Baptist; and on these declarations the seal of truth is impressed by this *sign*. We are not to conclude from the words, *σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ισραήλ*, that the expression *σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ* is to be taken in diminished significance, as a mere name of the Messiah. (Even Luther remarks, “I hold that he calls Him in a simple manner, a son of God, as we call a pious holy man, a man of God; and that, therefore, also Nathanael speaks of Him as of a prophet.”) The Old Testament teaches most distinctly, that the King of Israel, the Messiah, is far exalted above the human stage. This teaching is contained also in that Psalm in which the two designations of Messiah, as King and as Son of God, occur together, and indeed in immediate juxtaposition, Ps. ii. 6, 7, and in which these two designations have their root. The Son of God appears in ver. 12 as He, a trust in whom brings salvation, whose wrath is destruction, and who is therefore raised above the sphere of man: “Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish in the way, for soon will His wrath be kindled. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.” Delitzsch would refer all, from “lest He be angry,” to Jehovah. But in this, the reference to ver. 9 has been left out of account, where God says to the Anointed: “Thou shalt break them with a sceptre of iron, Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” It is manifest, that the Psalmist warns the rebels not to expose themselves to the destructive judgments to be executed by the Anointed: *q.d.*, “Lest He break you with the sceptre of iron, and dash you in pieces like pottery.” In Isa. ix. 6, the great future King of Israel bears the name of God-hero, the hero who is God [Eng. Vers. “The mighty God”]; who is, therefore, infinitely raised above all human heroes.

Jesus would not have attributed faith to Nathanael, if the latter had not raised himself above the purely human sphere. Faith moves always in the superterrestrial region. But we have beforehand no reason to weaken the significance of Nathanael's confession to the Son of God. Man was placed so low in the Old Testament, that a mere man could procure but little according to the Israelitish conception. That which was expected from the future King of Israel, was far beyond the sphere of man. We are here in the circle of those who had been excited by the Baptist. But he had insisted in the strongest manner on the superhuman nature of the Messiah : After me comes a man who was before me, whose shoe-latchet I am not worthy to unloose.—The Messiah appears as King of Israel, besides in Ps. ii. and Isa. ix. 6, also in Jer. xxiii. 5, 6 : “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and He shall reign as King, and shall prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely ; and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” And in Zech. ix. 9: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion ; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem : behold, thy King cometh unto thee : He is just, and having salvation ; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.”—When Nathanael designates the Messiah as King of *Israel*, it surely does not occur to him to assign to Him a limited dominion. *The King of Israel* is rather, according to Ps. ii. and Ps. lxxii. 8, at the same time, as such, the King over the whole earth. The heathen are joined to Israel in consequence of the advent of their King ; cf. Isa. ii. 3 ; Zech. viii. 23 ; but especially Isa. xliv. 5, where it is predicted, that in the Messianic times there would take place an admission of born heathens into the kingdom of God on the grandest scale : “One shall say, I am the LORD'S; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob ; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the LORD, and shall boast the name of Israel.” Also Isa. lvi. 3, 6, 7 ; Ezek. xlvii. 22, 23. To this grand adoption corresponds the grand exclusion, to which our Lord indirectly refers in ver. 47, by the distinction of true Israel *without*, and of false *with*, δόλος. Sinners, according to Ps. i., cannot stand in the congregation

of the righteous ; and it is essential to the kingdom of Christ, to undertake the separation between the true and the false seed.

Ver. 50. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, thou believest : thou shalt see greater things than these."—We have no reason to take *πιστεύεις* interrogatively. It is a simple statement. Luther : "Thou believest in Me for this single work and miracle, that I stand here, and thou art far from Me, and hearest that I saw thee, and believest that I am the person whom the prophets have foretold." With the words, *μείζω τούτων ὅψει*, cf. Ps. lxxi. 19, where Israel says, "Who hast done great things : O God, who is like unto Thee !" and ver. 21, "Thou increasest my greatness," the great deeds which are done for me.

Ver. 51. "And He saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."—By the repeated Amen, which is found in the Old Testament, Num. v. 22, where the woman suspected of adultery is to answer to the curse, Amen, amen, and in Neh. viii. 6, Jesus makes Himself known as the "faithful witness," Rev. i. 5,—as the unconditionally credible, who speaks that which He knows, and testifies that which He has seen : John iii. 11. It is the expression of decided *Plerophoria*, which can flow only from the most intimate communion with God. The double Amen is found only in the discourses of Christ in John. Matthew, Mark, and Luke have less regarded the significance of the repetition. As Bengel remarks, the difference is particularly apparent in the parallel passages. Cf. Matt. xxvi. 21, 34; John xiii. 21, 38. On the words, Verily, verily, *I say unto you*, Lampe remarks : "Jesus by this formula places Himself in contrast to all the prophets, who commonly appeal to the Lord with the formulas כה אמר יהוה or נאם יהוה, by which they declare that they do not speak on their own authority, but on that of Him who sends them. From such a mode of expression our Lord invariably abstains, and says always, *He* speaks, in order to intimate that He is that Jehovah who had spoken by the prophets."—In the words, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, etc., Jesus refers quite unmistakeably to the vision of the heavenly ladder which Jacob, according to Gen. xxviii., had in Bethel. The vision, the interpretation of which is given immediately afterwards by the

Lord in the Word—the discourse of the Lord forms the commentary to the vision—is granted to Jacob not as an individual, but as the head and representative of the chosen race. It has therefore its highest truth in Christ. In that it far transcends the lifetime of Jacob, it shows already that “in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Only when this is the case, has the vision fully proved its significance. The opened heaven, which, according to Quesnel, signifies that the intercourse between heaven and earth is to be re-established, is, judging from the expression here and in the other passages of the New Testament—Matt. iii. 16; Acts vii. 55, x. 11—taken primarily from Ezek. i. 1, the only passage of the Old Testament where the opening of the heaven is mentioned: “Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year—that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.” But the thing itself existed already in that event of the early times, in which was typified the Providence of God ruling over His Church. Jacob says in Gen. xxviii. 17, “This is the gate of heaven.” When it is said, Hereafter ye shall see the heaven opened, Christ refers us to our wretched and lamentable condition before Him and without Him. To have heaven closed, is for man the deepest calamity, so certainly as he is created in the image of God, and therefore can have happiness only in communion with his Original.—In immediate connection with the opening of heaven is the ascending and descending of the angels. It is striking that the ascending precedes the descending. This manifestly refers to the original passage, Gen. xxviii. 12, “And behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.” (That the ladder of the original passage is not mentioned here, shows that it has no independent significance, that it comes into consideration only as means to an end, and belongs only to the vision as such.) Every explanation of the matter must therefore be declined which does not at the same time harmonize with the original passage. If this is regarded, the reason for placing the ascension first may be sought in this only, that the angels would naturally first bear the supplications up to God, and then bring down the answer and aid. So Luther: “The dear angels take our prayer up to heaven, and bring us back the message that our prayer is heard.” It corresponds to the “ascending,” when in Rev. viii. 3, 4, an angel offers the incense of the prayers of the saints on the altar; and

it corresponds to the “descending,” when the angel, in ver. 5, is commissioned by God to cast down fire on the earth for persecuting His Church. Lücke remarks : “ He who understands the passage of the angelic appearances at the birth, the death, the resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, does not understand it at all.” And yet any one may see that these facts are comprehended in the declaration before us. For the very reason that these facts are included, the angels cannot possibly, without further explanation, be the “symbol of the uninterrupted revelation of God, of the liveliest, most intimate communion between God and the Messiah.” On the other hand, it is clear that we are not to restrict the declaration of Jesus to those angelic appearances. The circumstance, that in the original passage we have before us a vision, indicates that we are to distinguish between the thought and its form. The correct explanation is as follows : The thought of the special providence of God ruling over the Church gains plastic vividness of conception by the representation, that those who are variously employed in the service of Divine Providence ascend and descend upon the ladder. Now, Jesus has, in the first instance, proper angels in view ; but these not in opposition to the other modes of Divine revelation, but as the representatives of Divine revelations and communications in general. The representation, therefore, is not a typical or symbolical, but is rather an individualizing one. The whole is represented by a conspicuous part.—The angels descend on the *Son of man*, as they ascend *from* Him. Jesus designates Himself as the Son of man, after deducting the parallel passages, fifty-five times. The designation refers throughout to Dan. vii. 13, 14. In Daniel, the indication of the heavenly majesty is connected with the appearance of the Messiah as the Son of man. This connection our Lord has in view here, as also in a whole series of other passages. The designation has, in such passages, an apologetic significance. It concedes what is evident, but points at the same time to the hidden background of majesty. Cf. Christology iii. p. 84. So here the phrase, upon the Son of man, is equivalent to, upon Me, who, in spite of My appearance in lowness and likeness to men, am yet the Son of God, and shall be shown to be such by the descent of the angels. The Son of man continues His existence in the Church founded

by Him, with which He is always to the end of the world, and from and upon which the angels are continually ascending and descending.

In chap. ii. 1–11, follows now the first revelation of the glory of Jesus, at Cana in Galilee. This fact stands in unmistakeable connection with ver. 51, as even Bengel perceived: “Tertio die, post promissum datum i. 51. Nunc ostenditur specimen.” That which Jesus had there placed in prospect, here first receives its fulfilment; and Nathanael himself, to whom, as a representative of the other disciples, the  $\delta\psi\epsilon\sigma\theta\epsilon$  was first directed, was an eyewitness thereof. The connection is apparent also in ver. 3. The declaration of Jesus in ver. 51, forms without doubt the foundation for the saying of Mary.

Ver. 1. “And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there.”—On the third day, therefore on the seventh from ver. 19; the first in ver. 19–28, the second in ver. 29–34, the third in ver. 35–42, the fourth in ver. 43–51. The third day can only be the third day from *the end of the day* on which Nathanael came to Jesus. For the days from ver. 19–51 are always complete days. Add to this, that only thus do we gain sufficient time for the journey from Bethabara to Cana. This required at least three days. For the distance in a straight line, and disregarding deviations, amounted to twenty leagues; and if Nazareth was three days' journey from Jerusalem (Von Raumer, S. 120), we certainly cannot assume a less time for the journey from Bethabara to Cana. In this journey was occupied first the fourth of the single days designated, on which, according to ver. 43, the departure to Nazareth took place; then two days, which passed by without event, until the third day after this fourth arrived. We have thus a heptade of days, which are divided into four and three. The same division occurs also in the Apocalypse, especially in the case of the seals and trumpets, together with that of three and four with respect to the epistles and the vials. In one or the other of these modes the number seven is there usually divided. In the Gospel, the division of the heptade by the three and four is found in xxi. 2. We are not, in the case of such things, to be ready directly with the charge of “trifling.” It is important, first of all, to perceive the matter of fact; and

to this, a too rashly-formed judgment is only obstructive. But why is not Nature also brought under the charge of trifling, since in her the number plays a not less important part than in Holy Scripture?—The *marriage* lasted apparently only *one* day. Otherwise it could not, without further specification, be ascribed to the third day. Weddings of seven days were of themselves out of question in needy circumstances.—Since the appearance of Robinson's Journey (iii. 443–49), it is now generally assumed that the New Testament Cana is not the Kefr (village) Kenna, lying a league and a half to the south-east of Nazareth, but Kána el Jelil, situated three leagues to the N.N.E. So also Ritter (Erdkunde 15, 1, S. 389; 16, 1, S. 753 sq.). But this assumption is open to not unimportant objections. Of more importance still, than that Kefr Kenna is nearer to Nazareth, in the neighbourhood of which we must look for Cana, is the circumstance, that the addition,  $\tau\hat{\eta}\varsigma\Gamma\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha\varsigma$ , cannot here be a constituent part of the name, but is made only by John. It stands here in connection with the other topographical notices,  $\pi\acute{e}ra\pi\tau\omega\iota\sigma\delta\acute{a}\nu\iota\sigma\pi\acute{e}\nu$ , i. 28;  $\dot{\eta}\theta\acute{e}\lambda\eta\sigma\pi\acute{e}\nu\dot{\epsilon}\xi\acute{e}\lambda\theta\acute{e}\nu\epsilon\acute{i}s\tau\hat{\eta}\nu\Gamma\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha\acute{a}\nu$ , in ver. 44. The place itself could not need the addition, since there was no Cana out of Galilee. The Cana in the tribe of Asher, mentioned in Josh. xix. 28, was also in Galilee, but had probably long since disappeared. This being the case, the name Kana el Jelil cannot have been the original one. It probably proceeded from a mere combination. Kefr Kenna is the only Cana whose existence is really assured, and to which we must therefore provisionally adhere. Jerome knows of only one Cana: “Et est hodie oppidulum in Galilæa gentium.” In the alleged Kana el Jelil there is no native population at all, which could have preserved the ancient name of the place. It is a mere ruin; and ruins are patient, and allow themselves to be named as people wish to name them. On the words, “and the mother of Jesus was there,” Luther remarks: “It appears that these were her poor nearest friends, that she had to be a mother to the bride; for she takes upon herself the management, as if she were specially in fault, when she sees want.” The supplementary character of the Gospel of John is seen in this, that he never mentions the name of the mother of Jesus, but rather presupposes it as known from the first Gospels. From the fact, that neither here nor in what follows

mention is ever made of Joseph, it has been rightly concluded that he was already deceased.

Ver. 2. "And both Jesus was called and His disciples to the marriage."—The mother of Jesus was already there when this invitation was made. It seems that Jesus and His disciples came to seek her there, and were then invited. The deficiency may have arisen, in part, from the unexpected increase in the number of the guests.<sup>1</sup> The love had surpassed the ability. It is not unimportant for our judgment of the remedy, that the need had been produced in part by Jesus Himself.—The bridal pair was doubtless a God-fearing one. Otherwise, the mother of Jesus would not have interested herself so much in them, and Jesus also would have declined the invitation. The invitation to Jesus and His disciples, at least those five whose conversion is described in the previous chapter (Lampe : "qui magnificat Jesum, illi etiam discipuli ejus grati sunt"), proceeded, as it seems, from a germinant faith, and had the same source as the invitation of Abraham to his three heavenly guests. They would rather expose themselves to be put to shame, than let Jesus and His disciples go.—The ready willingness with which Jesus accepts the invitation to the marriage, for Himself and His disciples, forms a contrast to the severe mode of life of John the Baptist: cf. Matt. xi. 19. Olshausen : "The first disciples of Christ were all originally disciples of the Baptist. His manner of life—rigid, penitential austerity, and solitary abode in the desert—naturally appeared to them the only one that was right. What a contrast for them, when the Messiah, to whom the Baptist himself had pointed them, takes them first of all to a marriage!"\* Jesus brings with Him new supernatural powers, in possession of which His disciples need not anxiously avoid contact with worldly affairs, but by which they are to overcome and sanctify them. The renunciation of the world is indicated and commanded only, so long as such powers do not yet exist. But it was of importance to indicate that marriage and married life are capable of such sanctification; it was of value for all times of the Church to make a protest against those who regard the *conjugal state* as a profane one,—a mode of consideration

<sup>1</sup> Bengel : "Jesus uberrime pensat tot hydriis vini, quot circiter comites adduxerat."

\* Translation pub. by T. and T. Clark, vol. iii. p. 374.

of which we find germs even in the apostolic age, 1 Tim. iv. 3. Moreover, we must regard the time at which Jesus accepts the invitation to the marriage. Bengel has already, with perfect correctness, remarked: "magna facilitas Domini: nuptiis interest *primo tempore*, dum discipulos allicit, per *severiores* inde vias progressurus ad crucem, in gloriam." Jesus would hardly have taken His disciples to a marriage shortly before His passion. When, in Matt. ix. 15, He says, with respect to His disciples, "But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast," we may assume, that even when this time was immediately before them, Jesus would not have taken His disciples to such occasions as those at which life is presented from the more cheerful side. In that first time, however, the acceptance of the invitation to the marriage appears the more suitable, since this, together with its independent significance, has also a high value as a symbol and adumbration.<sup>1</sup> Christ was not here the bridegroom; but the marriage, according to a conception naturalized by the Song of Songs, and widely extended in the New Testament, appears to be a representation of the relation of Christ to His Church, a type of the marriage of the Lamb. Cf. iii. 29; Matt. ix. 15, xxii. 1-14, xxv. 10; Eph. v. 32; Rev. xix. 7, xxii. 17, xxi. 2, 9. This symbolic dignity of marriage and married life presupposes its independent dignity. Only a sacred condition, only a venerable ordinance of God, can be an adumbration of the highest and holiest of all relations.

Ver. 3. "And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto Him, They have no wine."—That the meaning is, Jesus should procure wine, and this in a superhuman manner, and that therefore ideas like those of Bengel, according to which Mary requests Jesus to go away ("velim discedas, ut cæteri item discedant, antequam penuria patefiat"), and of Meyer, "She wished Jesus in general to apply some remedy, which might be done in the most natural way (by procuring more wine)," are to be unconditionally rejected, is shown by the answer of Jesus. If Mary had desired only what was usual, she would have made her request more plainly, and she would not have immediately understood the gentle hint of Christ in ver. 5.

<sup>1</sup> Augustine: "Quid mirum, si in illam domum ad nuptias venit, qui in hunc mundum ad nuptias venit?"

Only when her mind was already filled with thoughts of miraculous aid, could she have perceived, behind the apparent refusal, the hidden consent. Mary certainly could have had such thoughts only, if she had kept in her faithful heart what had been said to her by the angel, especially, "He shall be called the Son of God," Luke i. 35; further, the message of the shepherds, of which it is said in Luke ii. 19, *ἡ δὲ Μαριὰμ πάντα συνετήρει τὰ ρήματα ταῦτα, συμβάλλονσα ἐν τῷ καρδίᾳ αὐτῆς*, and the prophecy of Simeon, etc. According to Luke ii. 51, she kept all these sayings in her heart. John, by giving an account of the proposal of Mary, confirms the history of the childhood of Jesus, which he passes over, because here his predecessors Matthew and Luke had left no material for supplementation. With reference to the later time, P. Anton says, "She had had Him about her thirty years. How many conversations must they have held, together with diligent investigation of the prophets in comparison with present circumstances!" It is, however, yet to be explained how it is that Mary comes forward just now with such a definite expectation. This is doubtless founded in the fact, that she had just received from the disciples of Jesus, whose very existence was an important symptom, intelligence of the things which had occurred at the Jordan, and especially of the sayings of Jesus to Nathanael, "Thou shalt see greater things than these;" and, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, etc." She wishes and hopes that these words, which do not to no purpose immediately precede the narrative of the marriage at Cana, may here be verified; she wishes and hopes this the more, since the whole appearance of Jesus doubtless makes on her the impression of a previous great change.—The words, "They have no wine," are very characteristic. The mother of Jesus has herself the feeling of the impropriety of her request. She does not dare to express it directly; she only gently hints it, by calling attention to the need. So great is her reverence for her son. Luther: "Here behold this in His mother: she feels and complains to Him of the want, desires help and counsel from Him, with humble and modest proposals. For she does not say, Dear Son, get us wine; but, They have no wine. By this she touches His goodness, that she has recourse entirely to Him. As if she would say, He is so good and gracious, that I may not ask Him; I will only show Him what is wanting." Lampe

points out how these words are a monument of Mary's noblest virtues—her faith, her humility, and discretion. “But, together with these good qualities, there was yet something which displeased the Lord.” The Berleb. Bibel: “Inward, however, is the need of vine, if all sanctity and strength that remained to the soul are quite lost, and all that remained to it of support is taken away.”

Ver. 4. “Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come”—Jesus will do what Mary desires, but He will not do it for her sake, and in such a manner that she may suppose that thus hereafter He will serve her at her behest. It is not yet done, because His hour is not yet come; and when it is done, it will be done not because she has requested it, but because now the hour is come. The formula, What to me and thee? [What have I to do with thee?] stands always where a relation had in view by the other party, or already come to life, is rejected as improper, whether it be a friendly or an inimical one. In the very nature of the case, the formula always includes a censure. With this expression, “What to me and to you?” David, in 2 Sam. xvi. 10, refuses the sons of Zeruiah, when they urge him to take vengeance on Shimei. In 1 Kings xvii. 18, the woman says to Elijah, when her child is dead, “What to me and to thee, O thou man of God? thou hast come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son.” She thus renounces to the prophet the relation which had existed between them, and requests him to depart. In 2 Kings iii. 13, Elisha answers to the proposal which the king of Israel makes to him, “What to me and to thee? Get thee to the prophets of thy father.” According to Judges xi. 12, Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the children of Ammon, saying, “What to me and to thee, that thou art come against me to fight in my land?” In Matt. viii. 29, the demoniacs say to Jesus, “What to us and to Thee, Thou Son of God?” This mode of speech is peculiarly an Israelitish one. Of the analogies adduced from classical literature, only one saying corresponds with this, viz., that of a Stoic in Gellius, who, on being asked by another at a shipwreck, whether shipwreck were an evil, gave him a blow with a stick and said, “What to us and to thee, man? we are perishing, and do you still want to joke?” (*τί ήμῶν καὶ σοι, ἀνθρωπε; ἀπολλύμεθα, καὶ σὺ θέλων*

*παιᾶς;*) The address *γύναι*, Woman, agrees with the words, What to Me and to thee? (Bengel: "Imprimis huic formulæ non congruebat matris appellatio.") Jesus indicates by this, that in the concerns of His calling He is not subject to the fifth commandment, in harmony with Deut. xxxiii. 9, where it is made the duty of the servants of the sanctuary to save their father and mother, "I see them not;" and in harmony with the Decalogue, where the commandment to honour parents occupies, in relation to those which immediately regard our position towards God, an unconditionally subordinate position. Luther: "Although there is no greater power on earth than the power of father and mother, yet it is entirely at an end, when God's word and work are concerned." Jesus addresses His mother by *γύναι* also in xix. 26; but there also this address is for a definite reason. Calvin, with perfect correctness, remarks: "Hac Christi voce palam constat denuntiari hominibus, ne nominis materni honorem superstitione in Maria evehendo, quæ Dei propria sunt, in ipsam transferantur. Sic ergo matrem Christus alloquitur, ut perpetuam et communem seculis omnibus doctrinam tradat, ne immodicus matris honor Divinam suam gloriam obscureret."—Since Jesus straightway proceeds to work, the words, "Mine hour is not yet come," can mean only, *until now* Mine hour was not yet come. *Mine hour* can, from the connection, be only equivalent to, *the hour*, when it is suitable for Me to remedy the present need. This expression, *The hour is come*, occurs in the sayings of Jesus in John, and in the usage of the Evangelist himself, copied from them, with especial frequency; and indications of the significance of the hour are common also to the Apocalypse with the Gospel, ix. 15, xiv. 7, 15. But that the expression, which always has reference to Eccles. iii. 1, "Everything has its hour," does not take its origin in the independent usage of John, is shown by the saying of our Lord in Matt. xxvi. 45, *ἰδοὺ, ἤγγικεν ἡ ὥρα*. This mode of speech intimates the fact, that like all things else (xvi. 21), so also especially Jesus, His actions and the events of His life (xvi. 2, 4), are under a Divine necessity, which must be submitted to unconditionally, and ever regarded obediently, resignedly, joyfully. The Berleburger Bibel says, "The whole doctrine of the Divine tarryings and the Divine moment lies herein concealed." It seems that Jesus spoke these words for the ears of the servants. But Mary is not

misled by them. Her love is so great, that she regards her own repulse as nothing. She takes only the one thing in view, that Jesus is willing to do what she has requested Him, even if not because she has requested Him.<sup>1</sup> But why is Jesus so ready to remedy the need? If on another occasion there had occurred a deficiency of wine, He certainly would not have exerted His miraculous power. But here He interposes for the honour of the marriage, to remedy the deep shame which the bridal party must have experienced, if they had not been able for their day of honour to provide that which belonged to the honour of the day. Even if there were no real need, yet it is a very embarrassing perplexity, extending in its consequences over the whole life, if one is to come into disgrace on such a day, not only before the guests, but also before the whole place. It is right comforting to know from this occurrence, that Jesus remedies not merely real needs, but also perplexities, especially in married life.

Ver. 5. "His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."—Mary understands the answer of Jesus correctly thus, that He only opposes her interference, but will do what she desires. Now that she is certain of His willingness, she has no doubt of His power. The word which she speaks to the servants, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it," is a word of unconditional faith. It seems that Mary, in this saying, alludes to Gen. xli. 55: "And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith unto you, do." LXX. ὁ ἐὰν εἴπῃ ὑμῖν ποιήσατε. The resemblance is hardly a chance one, as the situation corresponds to the agreement of the words.

Ver. 6. "And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece."—*Kεῖσθαι* is also used, where we say *stand*. Cf. xix. 29; Jer. xxiv. 1, LXX.; Odyss. 17, 331. The *κατά*—*after the manner of*, or *according to*—designates the

<sup>1</sup> Calvin: "Significat se hactenus non incogitantia vel torpore cessasse. Interea subindicat, sibi rem curae futuram, ubi opportunitas advenerit. Itaque sicut matrem insimulat, quod intempestive festinet, ita zursum miraculi spem facit. Utrumque agnoscit sancta virgo, neque enim amplius eum compellat: et quem ministros admonet ut quidquid ille præcepit faciant, novum quiddam sperare se ostendit."

object served by these water-pots. The purifications were very various, and had reference not only to the body, but also to vessels. *'Avá* is commonly used in the New Testament as a distributive particle: cf. Rev. iv. 8. The Attic *metretes* contained about thirty-three Berlin quarts. The aggregate water-pots contained, therefore, twelve to eighteen ankers [ninety to one hundred and thirty-five English gallons]. This is too much, according to many expositors, and has given the enemies of the Gospel occasions for attack. We may not remark, with Lücke, that it is not said that the whole of the contents was made wine. For why should Jesus have had all the vessels filled with water, if the miracle was not to have such extensive dimensions? How, then, could Jesus have left it to the servants to draw where they would? Nor shall we, with some, lay the chief emphasis on the fact, that the suspicion of deception would have been at hand in the case of a smaller quantity. The principal reason is far rather this, that the revelation of the glory of the Lord, which is designated in ver. 11 as the object of the act, would have been an incomplete one, if the miracle had borne a more diminutive character. As it is said of God in Ps. lxxv. 9, "Thou visitest the earth, and givest it superfluity; Thou greatly enrichest it; the river of God is full of water,"—so it became Jesus to prove Himself the rich Son of this rich Father. For the same reason, in feeding the multitudes, the miracle goes beyond the need. When objection is raised, that the quantity of wine would give an impulse to the luxuriousness of the guests, it might just as well be desired that on account of the drunkard God should not vouchsafe a good harvest-time.<sup>1</sup> The abuse of it was least of all to be feared in this circle, in the presence of Jesus, and in view of the miracle, which would fill their minds with sacred awe.

Ver. 7. "Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water."—Why does Jesus cause water to be first brought? why does He not fill the empty jars with wine? Because miracles are connected as much as possible with the natural substratum,

<sup>1</sup> Calvin: "Sed mirum est, quod Christus, frugalitatis magister, vini et quidem præstantissimi magnam copiam largitur. Respondeo, quum nobis quotidie Deus largum vini proventum suppeditat, nostro vitio fieri, si ejus beneficium irritamentum est luxuriæ, quin potius hæc temperantia nostræ vera est probatio: si in media affluentia parci tamen ac moderati sumus."

as may be seen even in the instance of the miracles and signs in Egypt. The natural is from the same God who works the miracles, and the natural order is disturbed only where it is not sufficient.—Ver. 8. “And He saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast.” The miracle is performed between this and the previous verse. The word *now* indicates that the transmutation is already accomplished.—Vers. 9, 10. “When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was (but the servants which drew the water knew), the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have become drunken, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.” The testimony of the ruler of the feast to the reality of the wine and its goodness is that with which we are here alone concerned; and there is not the slightest occasion to subtilize on the words, “when they have become drunken.”<sup>1</sup> We are not to conclude from the general saying, that the guests were intoxicated in this case. Where Jesus, His mother, and His disciples were, in the house of the God-fearing people who had invited them, such a thing certainly could not occur. How shameful drunkenness then was among respectable people, is sufficiently shown by Ecclesiasticus xxxi. 30 sq. The miracle of Jesus presupposes the holy sobriety of the circle.

Ver. 11. “This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory; and His disciples believed on Him.”—The verse is at the same time the rounding-off of the whole group. It began with the testimony of John to the impending appearance of Christ and His glory: it concludes with the account of the first act by which Jesus gave a full proof of His glory; in which, therefore, the previous announcement of John found its verification. Christ, by manifesting His glory, impressed His seal at the same time on the mission of the Baptist. We have here also the first verification of the words which Jesus spoke to Nathanael, vers. 50, 51. That the gulf between heaven and earth has been filled up, may be clearly perceived in the fact, that the Son of man has per-

<sup>1</sup> Bengel says briefly and well: “Simpliciter recensetur oratio architribulini, et consuetudo etiam Judæorum: ebrietas non approbatur.”

formed a work of omnipotence.—In Cana of *Galilee*, which had been designated as the chief scene of the saving activity of the Redeemer already in Isa. viii. 23, ix. 1, cf. Matt. iv. 14–16, and where, therefore, quite naturally, the beginning of the signs of Jesus was made. The Berleburger Bibel says: “Galilee had been already frequently mentioned in the prophets; as also distinctly, that in this despised province the light should be great.” *Tῆς Γαλιλαίας* would certainly not be repeated here, if it did not acquire significance by the reference to the prophetic passage.—In how far the present occurrence was a *sign*, is shown by the words, “He manifested His glory.” From that which Jesus here does, light was thrown upon His nature, upon the fulness of powers which were laid up in Him for the salvation of the poor and needy. The sign is distinguished from the wonder—*téras* (sign and wonder are connected together in iv. 48, *ἐὰν μὴ σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα ἴδητε, οὐ μὴ πιστεύσητε*)—in this, that in the former the objective signification and the end are taken into view; in the latter, the subjective feeling called forth by it, indirectly that which is extraordinary, exceeding the usual course of nature. All wonders are signs, but all signs are not wonders, since sometimes even common things are employed as signs. But here, according to the connection, it is a miraculous sign which is spoken of. It was already a sign in this sense, when Jesus saw Nathanael under the fig-tree, where a human eye could not have seen him. But this sign, in comparison with the greater one here, falls so much into the background, that it may be ignored. This first sign found afterwards in Cana itself a continuation. In iv. 46 it is said, “So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine.” Here He speaks the word by which the son of the nobleman in Capernaum was healed. It is then said, in ver. 54, which forms the conclusion of the second group, as this does of the first: *τοῦτο πάλιν δεύτερον σημεῖον ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς, ἐλθὼν ἐκ τῆς Ἰουδαίας εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν*. Now, although, according to this, the continuation in part occurs in Cana itself, yet this is not to be regarded as the only one. It is not said that this was the beginning of miracles in Cana, but that Jesus in Cana (the *τὴν* before *ἀρχὴν* is rightly omitted by Lachmann and Tischendorf) made such a beginning of miracles in general. The next miracles, of which the Evangelist gives an account, were performed in

Jerusalem, ii. 23, iii. 2.—On the words, “and manifested forth His glory,” Calvin correctly remarks: “From this is clear at the same time the object of the miracle. For it is equivalent to saying, Christ performed this miracle, *in order that* He might thus make known His glory.”<sup>1</sup> The words stand in unmistakeable connection with Isa. xl. 5, “And the glory of Jehovah shall be revealed,” namely, in the advent of the Messiah, of whom it is said in Micah v. 4, “And He shall stand and feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD His God,” who is so closely connected with God, that the whole fulness of the Divine power and majesty belongs to Him,—according to Isa. ix. 6, of the Godhead. John, in referring this passage of the Old Testament to Christ, proceeds on the conviction, that in Christ the Jehovah of the Old Covenant has appeared in the flesh. To the same passage of Isaiah refers also John i. 14, “We beheld His glory,”—there, the רָאָה of the original passage; here, the נִגְלָה. The Baptist had already preceded in the reference of this passage to Christ. If he, the forerunner of Christ, was the voice crying in the wilderness, i. 23, Christ must be He in whom the glory of the Lord was revealed. The reference to this passage is perfectly evident in the words of the Baptist, i. 31: ἵνα φανερωθῇ τῷ Ἰσραὴλ, διὰ τοῦτο ἐγὼ ἥλθον. The words lead to the divinity of Christ, even disregarding the reference to this single passage of the Old Testament. It is unmistakeable, that the δόξα, the glory, which according to our text dwells in Jesus, stands in reference to the *glory of the Lord*, בְּכֹור יְהוָה, LXX. δόξα κυρίου, which meets us so often in the Old Testament—the incomparable glory, which resides in the Lord, and makes itself known in His appearances. Only the only-begotten Son of God reveals His glory. Nothing similar is said of any of the previous miraculous deeds. Moses could only point to the manifestation of the glory of the Lord, Exod. xvi. 7: “And in the

<sup>1</sup> Lampe: “Non credibile est Jesus divinam suam potentiam interponere voluisse, ut abundantiam vini in nuptiis terrestribus procuraret, nisi ut majorum illorum operum, quæ moliebatur, præludium daret.” He also strikingly indicates how the present act was excellently adapted to form such a prelude. “Nihil spirabat nisi benignitatem, φιλανθρωπίαν, beneficentiam, qua non solum familiari modo inter homines tenuioris etiam sortis conversabatur, sed etiam ad supplendas communes eorum necessitates se demittebat.”

morning, then ye shall see the glory of the Lord.”—In the words, “and His disciples believed on Him,” is intimated the object of the manifestation of the glory of the Lord: cf. xx. 31, where the object of the description of the glorious deeds of the Lord, and, therefore, also of these deeds themselves, is thus designated: *ἴνα πιστεύσητε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστιν ὁ Χριστὸς, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ ἴνα πιστεύοντες ζωὴν ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὄνόματι αὐτοῦ.* John wrote this, “and they believed,” on the ground of his own experience. The miracle in Cana made an epoch in his own life of faith. We have here also the key to the fulness of the narrative. Bengel: “*Prima Christi miracula singulari copia proponuntur, quia his nixa fidei initia.*”

In conclusion, we give a series of remarks of Luther, which are adapted to set the fact in a proper light. “This is the first miraculous sign which our dear Lord Jesus did on earth, because, as John himself informs us, He wished to manifest His glory to His disciples, in order that by such miracles they might become acquainted with Him, and hold Him to be the Son of God, the true Messiah; since He can do that, which no other on earth can do, namely, change the order of creation, and make wine out of water. Such art must be the art of God only, who is Lord over the creation; men have it not.—Hence, this work is to serve especially this purpose of making us truly acquainted with our dear Lord Christ, and causing us with sure confidence to take refuge in Him when want and necessity come upon us, and to seek help and grace in Him, which shall certainly be given to us at the proper time.—But, because such teaching and consolation are found in all the miraculous works of Christ, we will now treat in particular of the circumstance, that our Lord performed such a miraculous sign at the marriage, in order that the teaching concerning matrimony may remain even among Christians; for it is of much consequence.—He bestows good wine on the poor wedding by a great miracle. He confirms by this, that marriage is God’s work and ordinance; however despised and small a thing it may be among the people, still God acknowledges His work, and holds it dear.—Here Christ allows us to see that He has no displeasure in the expense of the wedding, nor in all that was proper to it, as ornament, and to be merry, to eat and drink, as usage and the custom of the country requires; which yet seems as if it were a superfluity, lost money,

and a worldly matter: so far, however, that everything be in moderation and like a wedding.—When man and wife live together in a really Christian manner, our Lord God nourishes them so easily, that they get more than they think. Our dear Lord Christ still, at the present day, in my and thy house, if we are only godly and pious, and let Him take care of us, makes water into wine.” Not without foundation is the remark of the older expositors, especially of Lampe: “While the miracles of Moses began with the change of water into blood, the miracles of Christ begin by changing water into wine. In this the great difference was made evident between Moses and Christ: the former bears the office of death; the latter, of life.”

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## CHAPTER II. 12.—IV. 54.

This second group, beginning at Capernaum, and concluding there also, the third in v. 1—vi. 71, the fourth in vii. 1—xii. 50, contain the three journeys of Jesus to the feast at Jerusalem, and the events connected therewith.

The conclusion of the second group refers back to the conclusion of the first.

### CHAP. II. VERSES 12—25.

In vers. 12, 13, we have the journey to Jerusalem; in vers. 14—22, the purification of the temple, by which Jesus entered on His Messianic calling at Jerusalem. In vers. 23—25, we have an account of how, in consequence of the miracles which Jesus did in Jerusalem, many believed on Him, and of the position which Jesus took with respect to them.

Ver. 12. “After this He went down to Capernaum, He, and His mother, and His brethren, and His disciples; and they continued there not many days.”—From the connection with the following verse, we perceive that Capernaum was visited on the journey to the feast at Jerusalem. To such an occasion we are led also by the dissimilarity of the companions; the brothers of Jesus not yet having believed on Him.—John does not furnish a complete narrative. He gives only paraleipomena.

He passes over here the return of Jesus to Nazareth ; this being known from the first Gospels as His usual residence at that time : cf. i. 46, 47. That He first returned thither from Cana, and did not go directly to Capernaum, is shown by the fact, that we here meet with His brothers in His train, whose presence at the marriage in Cana is not mentioned. That Jesus did not go immediately from Cana to Capernaum, follows also from this, that otherwise He would have spent altogether only a few days in Galilee. If the Passover had been so near, Jesus would hardly have gone back first from the Jordan to Galilee, nor would His companions.—This stay of Jesus in Capernaum is not identical with that of which we have an account in Matt. iv. 13. For here, Jesus remains in Capernaum only a few days ; while, on the other hand, in Matthew, He establishes Himself at Capernaum. In Matthew, Jesus comes to Capernaum when John was already delivered up ; but, on the other hand, we find in John iii. 23 sq., that the Baptist is still in unrestricted activity. “John was not yet cast into prison,” it is said in iii. 24. The settling of Jesus in Capernaum can only have taken place after the journey to Galilee, of which we have an account in iv. 43. That Jesus had been there transiently, before His settling there, is testified by Luke iv. 23, according to which He performed miracles there on this transient visit.—Why is this short stay in Capernaum on the journey to the feast mentioned, when John does not speak of any remarkable event there ? It seems that the reason was a personal one,—that John was from Capernaum, and that Jesus put up at the house of his father. The residence of John’s father, Zebedee, is nowhere expressly noticed. But it is in favour of Capernaum, that the nearest friends of John, his and his brother’s partners, Luke v. 10, Peter and Andrew, were of Bethsaida, which, as it seems, was the fishing suburb of Capernaum, or, at all events, in its immediate vicinity. The connection of Bethsaida and Capernaum is evident from John i. 45, compared with Luke iv. 38, Mark i. 29,—passages which can be brought into harmony only on the supposition that Bethsaida formed a part of Capernaum, with which also the name very well agrees.—When Jesus left Capernaum and went to Jerusalem, the temptation by Satan had not yet taken place. From the three first Gospels only thus much is established, that it must have taken place after the baptism of Jesus, and

before the return of Jesus to Galilee, after the incarceration of the Baptist: Matt. iv. 12; Mark i. 14; Luke iv. 14. Since the wilderness cannot be sought elsewhere than in Judea, and since, between the baptism of Jesus and the first return to Galilee, in John, there is no room for the temptation, we shall have to place it in the time when, after His first Passover, and after the solemn entrance on His office in the temple connected with it, Jesus went with "His disciples into the land of Judea; and there He tarried with them, and baptized :" John iii. 22. It is shown by John iv. 2, that the disciples about this time acted with a certain degree of independence. Jesus could therefore well leave them to themselves for some time. If the devil, in the temptation, takes Jesus with him into the holy city, and places Him on the pinnacle of the temple, etc., Matt. iv. 5, this gains a special significance, if Jesus had been shortly before in the holy city and in the temple as the Son of God, and had there entered on His calling by the purification of the temple. This formed, as it seems, the point of departure for the demand of the devil. Jesus, who had appeared as the Lord of the temple, is to prove Himself such. The Jews had indeed already said, "What sign shovest Thou unto us, seeing that Thou doest these things ?" The third temptation also is more explicable, if the purification of the temple had already preceded. This, according to ii. 18, was the occasion of the first conflict with the Jews; and that the circumstances even then assumed a threatening character, shows that Jesus could not trust Himself even to those in whom there was a beginning of faith. If the path of suffering was then already opened before Jesus, the offer of Satan, "All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me," has a much better point of connection, than if it was made before Jesus had had any experience of His calling.—From Joseph's not being mentioned, it has been rightly concluded, that he must have died between the twelfth year of Jesus, when he is last mentioned, Luke ii. 42 sq., and His thirtieth year.—Are the *brothers* of Jesus His own brothers, younger sons of Mary, or His cousins, sons of Alphaeus or Cleophas and Mary, who, according to xix. 25, was a sister of the mother of Jesus—either a full sister, or, as there is no instance of two full sisters bearing the same name, a sister-in-law? To the supposition of full brothers of Jesus, the Christian sense has from

the earliest times been violently opposed. Augustine, for example, says, “Num enim Maria iterum peperit? Absit! illa femina mater esse potuit, mulier esse non potuit.” And even in the eighteenth century, the excellent reformed theologian Elsner says, “Pie recteque existimat Ecclesia, Josephum nunquam Mariam tetigisse, quamvis domum eandem duxerit.”<sup>1</sup> That modern theology has no objection whatever to this supposition, shows that between it and that of the elder Church there is still a wide gulf fixed. We should fairly take warning by a Br. Bauer, who, in his “Critique of the Gospel History of the Synoptics,” i. p. 46, says, “Had Mary really given birth to the begotten of God, horror at the strangeness of it, and terror at that which had been wrought directly by the power of the Highest, would have caused that Joseph would not afterwards have held conjugal intercourse with her;” who also brings forward the “mention of the sisters of Jesus,” admitted by the “believing [credulous] theology,” as a proof of the later origin of the view concerning the supernatural birth of Jesus.

The grounds on which the modern hypothesis is supported, do not show themselves capable of proof. The assertion, that history speaks of brothers, not of cousins, of Jesus, is wrecked on the usage of the Old Testament, in which the name of brother is so often extended to near relations. Here, however, a special reason comes in. The cousins of Jesus would not probably have been called His brethren, if there had been real brethren. But thus they were His *nearest* relations. Perhaps a closer connection existed, which we may imagine in various ways; *ex. gr.*, that Joseph, after the death of his brother Cleophas, had adopted his children.

When Matthew, in i. 25, calls Jesus the first-born son of Mary, there is in this no intimation of other sons, born afterwards. The historical narration had there to do singly and alone with the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah, concerning the birth of the Saviour of a *virgin*. With respect to this, it was

<sup>1</sup> On Matt. i. 25. In the Electra of Euripides, he says, “Colonus, vir tenuis sortis, cui Ægisthus male sibi metuens Electram Agamemnonis filiam in matrimonium dederat, testatur nunquam se cum ea, quamvis una habittasset, rem habuisse.” He states as the reason :

αἰσχύνομαι γὰρ ὀλβίων ἀνδρῶν τέκνα  
λαβὼν ὑβρίζειν, οὐ κατάξιος γεγών.

to be considered only, that no other sons were born before Jesus; what took place afterwards, was a matter of indifference for the present purpose of Matthew. That the first-born may at the same time be the only one, is shown by Ex. iv. 22.

“The brothers of Jesus,” it is further said, “cannot be identical with the sons of Alphæus, because in John vii. 5 they are separated from the Apostles as still unbelievers.” But that the brothers of our Lord did not *remain* unbelieving, is evident from the statement in Acts i. 14; and with the statement in John vii. 5, that they were then still unbelieving, corresponds their position in the list of the Apostles. In Matt. x. 3, James of Alphæus, Lebbæus, with the surname of Thaddæus, and Simon Zelotes, stand immediately before Judas Iscariot and after Matthew, whose calling is related in ix. 9. So in Mark iii. 18, and Luke vi. 15. In Acts i. 13, these three form the conclusion of the list of the Apostles.

“The brothers of Jesus,” it is said, “had in part different names from the sons of Alphæus and the cousins of Jesus, since two sons of Alphæus are called James and Joses, Matt. xxvii. 56, Mark xv. 40; while the brothers of Jesus, Matt. xiii. 55, Mark vi. 3, are called James and *Joseph*, according to the critically revised text.” But the reading in the latter passage is doubtful, and a matter of controversy. And the name Joses is without doubt a variation from Joseph; so that there is no real difference. The remarks are applicable here which were made with respect to the name of Peter’s father, i. 43.

“In Acts i. 14, the brothers of the Lord are expressly distinguished from the Apostles.” But from this it follows only, that, outside the circle of the Apostles, there were still other brothers or relations of Jesus. Joses is expressly named as such.

On the other hand, the following reasons are in favour of understanding by the brothers of Jesus His cousins.

When Jesus, in John xix. 26, 27, says, “Woman, behold thy son!” and thus names the Apostle John to be, as it were, His representative, as the son of Mary, it is implied in this, according to an unbiassed exegesis, that Mary had no other sons.

It is said in Matt. xiii. 55, “Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not His mother called Mary? and His brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?” In Matt. xxvii. 56 it is said,

“Among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses.” The two latter cannot well be others than those mentioned in the former passage. Consequently, James and Joses had for mother another Mary than the mother of Jesus. Further, in the list of Apostles in Matt. x. 3 (cf. Mark iii. 18), James the son of Alphæus, and Lebbæus, with the surname Thaddæus, and Simon Zelotes, stand together. In Luke (vi. 15), before Judas the traitor, comes James the son of Alphæus, and Simon called Zelotes, Judas (the brother) of James. It is manifest that the Judas here is identical with the Lebbæus = Thaddæus of Matthew; that the first name also is not the real proper name, but only takes the place of the proper name, which had been branded with infamy by the traitor. We have, therefore, three of the names mentioned in xiii. 55, James, Simon, Judas, in the circle of the Apostles; and they do not occur here in an isolated manner, but they stand together precisely as in xiii. 55. James also always stands at the head, as in xiii. 55. In Luke vi. 15, and in Acts i. 13, they all follow in the same order. The personal identity with those mentioned in xiii. 55 cannot after this be doubted. But in the lists of Apostles, real brothers of Jesus are not to be thought of. For James is always designated as the son of Alphæus; and as his mother appears in Mark xv. 40, not Mary the mother of Jesus, but another Mary.

This Mary is, in Mark xvi. 1 and Luke xxiv. 10, called Mary of James. It was, therefore, a mode of characterizing and distinguishing this Mary, that she had a son James. This presupposes that the mother of Jesus had not also a son of this name.

When this Mary is, in Mark xv. 40, called the mother of James the Less, and of Joses, it is here presupposed that in the Christian circle there were only two well-known men of the name of James,—viz., the Great, the son of Zebedee, who took the first position on account of his greater age in Christ; and the Less, the son of Alphæus and Mary. If we understand by the brethren of Jesus full brothers, we thus make three prominent men of the name of James.

After the death of the elder James, every one knows whom Peter means when, in Acts xii. 17, he says, “Go, show these things to James and to the brethren.” In Acts xv. 13, it is

said, “James answered,” without any other further addition to guard against confounding the two. So also in Acts xxi. 18. “Luke, who in Acts (as in his Gospel), up to the death of the Apostle James of Zebedee, brother of the Apostle John, continually distinguishes, by the manner of mentioning him, James the Less, the son of Alphæus, from this James, uses, directly after his death (xii. 1, 2), simply the name of James. So in the same chapter, ver. 17, and further in xv. 13, xxi. 18.”<sup>1</sup> There was, therefore, after the death of James of Zebedee, only one James who was celebrated and generally known; and this can be no other than the second Apostle of this name, James of Alphæus.

“Paul, in the Epistle to the Galatians, ii. 9, 12, represents James, without further designation, as a highly influential man, a pillar of the Church; he even places him, together with Peter and John, as taking the place of the now martyred favourite disciple, James the son of Zebedee.”

In Gal. i. 19, Paul, after speaking of his intercourse with Peter, says, “But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord’s brother.” According to the simple interpretation, this passage declares that James, the brother of the Lord, was an Apostle. This is also confirmed by Acts ix. 27, 28. According to this passage, “Paul had intercourse in Jerusalem with ‘the Apostles,’—those who were then present in Jerusalem,—therefore, at least two. Now, Paul himself assures us that he saw Peter and no one else, save James, the brother of the Lord; so it follows distinctly, that James also, the brother of the Lord, is numbered by Luke (and consequently also by Paul) among the Apostles.” The Apostle James, however, is the son of Alphæus, and cannot, therefore, be the brother of the Lord in the proper sense. But it is established that here the son of Alphæus is designated as brother of the Lord; so by this the existence of a natural brother of the Lord named James is excluded. “It is entirely improbable,” says Wieseler, on Galatians, p. 77, “that Paul would here have designated the *cousin* of the Lord, James of Alphæus, the Lord’s brother, if there had really been besides him a natural brother of Jesus bearing the name of James.”

Jude designates himself in his epistle as the brother of

<sup>1</sup> The Brothers of James. First half by the author. (By the late Steiger.) Evang. K. Zeitung, 1834, Nr. 95 sq.

James, and is sure of having by this means made himself sufficiently known. While Joses disappears from history, we have an account of Simon, which shows him in an important position, and in which he is expressly designated as the cousin of the Lord. “Hegesippus informs us, that after the death of James the Just, and the subsequent capture of Jerusalem, the Apostles came together and appointed Symeon, son of Cleophas, Bishop of the Church of Jerusalem.” Eusebius, B. 3, 11, and especially 32. This Cleophas (John xix. 25) is plainly called by Hegesippus the uncle of the Lord, B. 3, 32, and especially 4, 22: he even, in the latter passage, makes use of the remarkable words, “But after James the Just had suffered martyrdom—Simeon, the son of Cleophas, our Lord’s uncle, was chosen, whom all preferred, *since he was the second cousin-german of the Lord.*”

“It is striking,” says Steiger further, “that in this manner we have four cousins of the Lord, who are called James, Simon, Judas, and Joses; while, as it is maintained, from the Gospel four natural brothers of the Lord are produced, who bear the same names.” This is certainly alone sufficient to show the erroneousness of the now current view. But that there are still more decisive reasons against it, we have already proved.

Ver. 13. “And the Jews’ Passover was at hand; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.”—It is a matter of course, that Jesus went up with the whole company mentioned in ver. 12; for this company had been formed for the pilgrimage. Why did Jesus go to the Passover? The answer is implied in what He did there. It was not for the fulfilment of a religious duty incumbent on Him, as on all the others. We find nowhere any indication that Jesus visited the temple for His own edification. This, however, would be necessary. For the religious duty was not satisfied by the mere outward appearance. If Jesus was the Lord of the Sabbath, He was also the Lord of the feasts. If, according to Matt. xvii. 26, He was free from the temple tribute, so also was He from the visit to the temple. The principle of avoiding offence, Matt. xvii. 27, might in any case be overcome by other higher considerations. Of much more importance to Christ was the exercise of His Messianic calling, which, from the significance of the temple, as the spiritual dwelling-place of the people, could not there be carried on in a mere corner. The prophets already predict that the Re-

deemer is to come to the daughter of Zion. The temple had already been the principal place for the prophetic agency of the Old Dispensation; and only by way of exception, and under very peculiar circumstances, had the prophets appeared elsewhere. But the exercise of His calling being of importance to Jesus, the Passover was precisely that time most adapted for His stay in Jerusalem. For at this, as the chief feast, the whole people were assembled at the temple. This feast was also especially adapted for the public and solemn announcement of His reformation, with which the Saviour would begin His activity in the temple. For it had itself a reformatory significance. The putting away of the leaven preached to the people that they should purge the old leaven from their heart and life, 1 Cor. v. 7. The eating of the unleavened bread required that they should endeavour after "sincerity and truth;" and the words, "Let your loins be girt about, and your lamps burning," are an interpretation of this rite at the Passover.

Ver. 14. "And found in the temple those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money sitting."— "It is very remarkable," says Quesnel, "that the first and last time that our Lord was in the temple after His baptism, He manifested there His zeal against the disrespect and desecration of which the Jews were guilty. Will not the example of the High Priest arouse the zeal of those who are clothed with His authority against so many desecrations of the churches, in which dwells the Divine majesty?" John's account of the temple-purification, with all its independence, is yet so like that of Matthew (xxi. 12, 13), that the thought obtrudes itself, that John wishes to point to this account, and thus to make known his purpose to supplement what Matthew had related concerning the act at the termination of Christ's ministry, by the report concerning a similar transaction, which pertains to the commencement of the ministry. On the other hand, the first Evangelists are acquainted with the word which Jesus spoke in immediate connection with this act : Destroy this temple, etc.; Matt. xxvi. 61; Mark xiv. 58. By this they testify also, indirectly, to the occurrence itself ; and their reasons for not relating it can only be these, that of two similar events they usually omit one ; but especially, that up to the last Passover of Jesus they restrict themselves to the account of His activity in Galilee. In spite of their

close connection, the two facts have yet each their individual physiognomy. The one takes place at the first Messianic Passover of Jesus ; the other at the last ; both, on first entering the temple. In John, the Lord designates the desecrated temple as a house of merchandise, *oîkos ēμπορίou* ; in the first Evangelist, as ■ den of thieves, *σπῆλαιον λῃστῶν*. That is peculiar to John, which he connects with this occurrence in ver. 17–22. It cannot be a matter of doubt, that these transactions do not bear their object in themselves, but are to be regarded as symbolical. Only on a superficial consideration can the abuses which existed in the outer temple be regarded as the immediate object of Christ's attack. If we take into view the whole condition of things at that time, we shall see that it was a matter of comparative indifference whether a few buyers and sellers more or less transacted their business in the temple ; a deeper knowledge of human nature shows that every kind of outward purification, unless preceded by an inward one, is entirely in vain. Of what avail is it to keep back for a time the water of a stream, when the source is left unobstructed ? The fact, that Jesus at His last Passover found exactly the same evils which He had momentarily removed at His first, shows plainly the purposelessness of His act, when its significance is placed in its outward result.

It has been shown in the Third Part of my Christology,<sup>1</sup> that both transactions have reference to Malachi, and merely embody a twofold figure which is employed by him. Under the figure of a double purification of the temple, he announces a double purification of the theocracy. Then first appears the messenger of the Lord, who prepares the way before Him ; and then the Lord Himself, even the Angel of the Covenant, suddenly appears, who purifies and refines the children of Levi, and draws near to sinners in judgment. Now, the Saviour announces by the first act, that in Him appears in its loftiest reality the idea previously represented by John, the grace of God, which calls sinners to repentance ; by the second, that He will now unfold the other side of His nature, that He will no longer act as a prophet, but as Lord and Angel of the Covenant, and will destroy obdurate sinners.

In John, the reformatory character is evident. Calvin designates it as “a prelude to the reformation to be effected by

<sup>1</sup> Translation, published by T. and T. Clark, iv. p. 247.

Jesus," and says, "Ut omnes ad ejus doctrinam attenti essent, torpentes ac sopitas mentes novo et insolito facinore expergefieri oportuit." The proof that the second act is not, like the first, a symbolical announcement of reformation, but an announcement of judgment, the embodied *ἴδον ἀφίεται ὑμῖν ὁ οἶκος ὑμῶν ἔρημος* in Matt. xxiii. 38, was given in the Christology. The purification of the temple in Matthew forms the commencement of a whole series of discourses, symbolic actions, and parables, which all refer to the same subject. In these the Pharisees nowhere appear as the object of reformatory activity: the account is now closed, the reed is broken, and the judgment pronounced. If the symbolic action must have had the same meaning on both occasions, it could not have been repeated.

Together with the common point of departure,—Mal. iii. 1, "Behold, I will send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me; and the LORD, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in," the first half of which is referred to in John, and the second in Matthew,—the Lord has also in view, on each of the two occasions, a particular passage of the Old Testament. In John, where the temple is designated as a house of merchandise, *οἶκος ἐμπορίου*, it is Zech. xiv. 21, "And in that day there shall no more be the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts." Aquila, according to Jerome, translated here directly, mercator, *ἐμπόρος*. Jonathan: "Et non erit amplius exercens mercaturam in domo sanctuarii." And if we are not permitted to take *כָּנָעַנִי* directly with the meaning of *merchant*, but that rather the usage here finds place, according to which the godless members of the covenant-people are designated as heathens or uncircumcised, or specially as Canaanites or some other single heathen people, still we are not to refuse a certain right to the interpretation of *merchant*. The very fact that Canaanite means at the same time *merchant*, shows that among this people their unholy disposition made itself known especially in the predominance of material interests. In Zeph. i. 11, where the fall of the covenant-people is announced in the words, "the whole people of Canaan is cut down," the parallel clause, "all they that bear silver are cut off," shows that the Canaanites are not chosen arbitrarily from the midst of the heathen nations, but that they are specially considered on account of their unholy

greediness of gain, and their trafficking spirit, in which the degenerate people had become like them. In Hosea xii. 7, the degenerate covenant-people is designated as “Canaan ; the balances of deceit are in his hand ; he loveth to oppress.” That the trafficking spirit is an inherited fault of the Jewish people, is shown by the experience of the present day, by the abuses which called forth the purification of the temple, and by the appearance of Pharisaism, which is only the spirit of traffic introduced into religion ; they wish to carry on a profitable business even with God. If in this trafficking spirit we perceive the hereditary sin of the Jews, it will appear the more significant that our Lord chose these mercantile pursuits as the material for the symbolic action by which He represented the necessity of reformation.

On the other hand, at the second purification of the temple, it is Jer. vii. 11 which is referred to : “ Is this house, which is called by My name, become a den of robbers (LXX. μὴ σπῆλαιον ληστῶν ὁ οἶκός μου : cf. Matt. xxi. 13 ; Mark xi. 17 ; Luke xix. 46) in your eyes ? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the LORD.” These latter words, which point to the impending judgment, show from what point of view, in this original passage, the temple is designated as a den of robbers. The whole chapter breathes destruction for the temple and the people, and reformation is no longer spoken of. It is said in vers. 14, 15, “ Therefore will I do unto this house, which is called by My name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. And I will cast you out of My sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim.”—The first occasion for the advance of the Jewish spirit of traffic into the sanctuary (in the more extended sense) occurs in Deut. xiv. 24 sq. There, the permission is given to those at too great a distance from the sanctuary, to sell the portion of property which had fallen to the Lord’s share, and to procure for the money, at the place of the sanctuary, the oxen, sheep, etc., for the sacrifices and sacrificial repasts. It was sought to render it as convenient as possible for the buyers, until the market was removed at last into the outer spaces of the sanctuary itself. Especially at the feast of Passover must this traffic have exercised a highly disturbing influence. We perceive from 1 Sam. i. 21, according to which Elkanah went yearly to the sanctuary to offer the yearly sacrifice, and his vows, that at the

Passover the people balanced accounts, as it were, with the Lord, and then offered the portion of the inheritance which had fallen to Him in the course of the year. When Augustine says, "Non magnum peccatum, si hoc vendebant in templo, quod emebatur ut offerretur in templo, et tamen ejicit illos. Quid si ibi ebriosos inveniret," etc., he has not sufficiently considered that the spirit of traffic was the bosom sin of the Jews, and that, among such a people, this practice must have had a particularly injurious influence, causing much passionate excitement and clamour, calling forth also much participation among those who were not immediately interested in it, and thus entirely driving away the spirit of devotion.

Ver. 15. "And when He had made a scourge of small cords, He drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen ; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables."—"It is to mock God," says Quesnel, "when men come to commit new sins at the very place where they are to bewail and expiate their old ones." The cords for the scourge, Jesus doubtless took from the sellers. It is not mentioned that He struck them with the scourge, nor was this necessary. It was a symbol only of the castigation which the practice merited, the embodied  $\epsilon\xi\acute{\epsilon}\beta\alpha\lambda\epsilon\nu$ . The sheep are placed first intentionally, in order that the masculine  $\pi\acute{a}v\tau\alpha\varsigma$  may be referred to the persons. That by "all" is meant those who are mentioned *first* in ver. 14, is shown by the additional clause, "and the sheep and the oxen." If  $\pi\acute{a}v\tau\alpha\varsigma$  does not refer to these persons, then nothing is said of the sellers, with whom, however, Jesus had chiefly to do. The Berleburger Bibel remarks on the words, *He drove them all out of the temple*, "As He does inwardly also ; for everything foreign must give way on His entrance into the heart." That the expulsion of the sellers was not a proper miracle, is evident from ver. 18, in which the Jews demand that Jesus should justify His action by a miracle. In explanation of the effect, we must consider that Jesus had a powerful confederate in the consciences of the offenders—an evil conscience makes men cowards ; that the privilege of the prophets was acknowledged among the people, and had been sanctioned by illustrious examples in the past, as that of Elijah ; and that at this time the people were filled with a presentiment of a great impending reformation and overthrow of existing relations. But we must,

above all, take into account the majesty of the person of Jesus, whose countenance then certainly shone like the sun, and His eyes were as a flame of fire.<sup>1</sup> We have a parallel instance in xviii. 6, where it is said of the priestly myrmidons, ἀπῆλθον εἰς τὰ ὄπιστα καὶ ἐπεσον χαρά.

Ver. 16. "And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence : make not My Father's house an house of merchandise."—Anton remarks, "These were little Tetzels ; these He treated more gently, and did not cast out their merchandise." But, in truth, Jesus did no otherwise with the sellers of the oxen and sheep. The scourge of small cords was only a symbolical expression of "Take these things hence," though He doubtless expressed it verbally also. Substantially, the scourge applies also to the dealers in doves, and the verbal expression also to the venders of oxen and sheep. Even on this first exercise of His office in the sanctuary of the nation, Jesus calls God His Father ; as in Luke ii. 49, He said, with respect to His first visit to the temple, οὐκ ἔδειτε ὅτι ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρός μου δεῖ εἶναι με ; The antithesis to the house of merchandise is formed by the house of prayer in Isa. Ivi. 7. The temple was a house of merchandise in another sense than that here chiefly meant ; for sacrifices were bargained for, as well as dealt in. If among the Jews of the present day the exchange has taken the place of the temple, the difference is not very important, for the temple was a kind of exchange.

Ver. 17. "And His disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of Thine house consumeth me."—In Ps. lxix. 9 it is said, "For the zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up, and the reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon me." The two clauses of the verse are not in synonymous parallelism, but the second designates the consequences of the first : The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up ; therefore the reproaches are fallen on me. For that the expression, "consumeth me," does not designate the outward consequences of the zeal, but rather its inward intensity—equivalent to, it wears me away (Luther : I am zealous even unto death ; with the remark : It is a mournful mood, so that the heart pines away, disappears, and is as it were consumed, as the moths consume a garment)—is shown by the

<sup>1</sup> Jerome says, "Igneum quiddam et sidereum radiabat ex oculis ejus et divinitatis majestas lucebat in facie."

parallel passage, Ps. cxix. 139, "My zeal hath consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten Thy words." In the former passage, the temple is regarded as the centre of the whole Israelitish religion. The zeal here is the zeal of love. Luther says : " He is not moved to the anger which He here manifests by hatred, but by a deep love to God, who has founded this temple for His glory, for commerce in the Divine Word, that in the Church men might learn how they could be saved, and could serve God.—This made Him sad, to behold in His Father's house such a horror and calamity that souls should be miserably ruined : with this He is angry, for He loved God." The quotation of this passage from the Psalms is characteristic of the first cleansing of the temple in distinction from the second. It shows that the first transaction cannot be one absolutely peculiar to Christ ; that it was typified by previous acts of righteous persons ; and that in it a pattern is given for all believers, and especially for all the servants of the Church. The passage could not have been quoted with reference to the *second* purification of the temple. For this did not form the summit of the activity common to all the servants of God (cf. Elijah's declaration : I have been zealous for the Lord) ; but it belongs entirely and solely to Christ, the Angel of the covenant.—The expositors of the Church call attention, with much earnestness, to the doctrine which is contained in these words for the ministers of the Church. Quesnel says, "Jesus teaches us that zeal for God's house is, as it were, the peculiar virtue of pastors." Luther : " All apostles and bishops have also attempted this, and still do. They very well know what it is, when they see that their faithful care, their toil and trouble, are all in vain, and some evil-disposed person comes and makes a noise, and breaks down in one day more than one could build or set up again in some years. He also will say, The zeal of Thy house hath eaten me up. *For the more pious a pastor or preacher is, the more he feels this zeal, and the more he should feel it.*" Calvin points out that, although the zeal must be common to all with the Son of God, it is not, however, permitted to all immediately to take up the scourge, and thus to attack abuses. For we have not the same authority, nor the same office.

Ver. 18. "Then answered the Jews, and said unto Him, What sign shovest Thou unto us, seeing that Thou doest these things?"

—These words of the Jews are the *answer* to the address of Jesus to the dealers in doves, who occupied the first place among them, and whose affair was adopted by the rest. “They had a certain reason for asking,” says Calvin; “for it does not behove a Jew, whenever there is anything faulty or displeasing to him in God’s temple, immediately to alter it.” In the meantime, the justification of Jesus was already implied in the imposing majesty of His appearance, and in the effect itself which He produced on this occasion. “Is it not a sufficient sign,” says Quesnel, “to effect such ready obedience, without any mark of authority, and to spread terror by a scourge of small cords?” Nevertheless Jesus granted the request, cf. ver. 23; only not to those who demanded it, because they were not deserving of it.

Ver. 19. “Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”—It is evident that these words are not to be referred, as they have been by many, on the ground of an erroneous view of ver. 21, merely to Christ’s death and resurrection, setting aside entirely all reference to the temple, usually so called. The reference to the material temple is rendered necessary by the fact, that only on this hypothesis does the sign stand in close connection with the proceeding which it is to vindicate. It was with respect to the material temple that Christ had taken upon Him full authority; He can therefore appeal only to a fact in the future which will prove His authority over *this* temple. Further, the hypothesis, that Jesus, when He spoke these words, pointed to His body, is refuted by the circumstance, that then the Jews could not so have understood Him, as we find they did, not merely here in ver. 20, but also in Matt. xxvi. 61, xxvii. 40, and Mark xiv. 57–59. But if He did not thus do, by *this temple* could be understood primarily, only the temple in which the transaction had taken place. A third reason is, that it seems impossible to separate these words from those in Matt. xxiv. 2, where our Lord, in reference to the material temple, says to the disciples, “See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, ὃς οὐ μὴ καταλυθήσεται.” Finally, it is said in Acts vi. 13, 14, ἔστησάν τε μάρτυρας ψευδεῖς λέγοντας· ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος οὐ παύεται ρόματα βλάσφημα λαλῶν κατὰ τὸν τόπου τοῦ ἀγίου καὶ τοῦ νόμου. ἀκηκόαμεν γὰρ αὐτοῦ λέγοντος· ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος οὗτος καταλύσει τὸν

*τόπον τοῦτον καὶ ἀλλάξει τὰ ἔθη ἡ παρέδωκεν ἡμῖν Μωυσῆς.* The false testimony consisted in this, that the false witnesses laid the causality of the destruction entirely on Jesus. Thus much, however, follows from the passage, that Stephen understood the impending destruction of the temple to be announced in the declaration of our Lord, and that, therefore, he did not refer it only to the body of Christ.

On the other hand, that we are not to stop with the reference to the material temple, is shown by the impossibility of this sense, as already made prominent by the Jews, and by the preposterous character of the declaration thus rendered; and that the reference, emphasized by John, to Christ's body, His death and resurrection, really exists, is shown by the mention of the three days, and by the comparison of our Lord's declaration in Matt. xii. 39, 40, according to which the sign of the prophet Jonah, or a repetition of it, should be given to the Jews. "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth;" and as Jonah afterwards appeared for a sign of judgment to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of man, after He has left the heart of the earth, appear for a sign of judgment unto this generation. Cf. Matt. xvi. 4.

It has been already pointed out elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> that we shall labour in vain in the solution of this sacred enigma, which the Saviour here presents before the Jews, so long as we fail to recognise the essential identity of the temple, the appearance of Christ in the flesh, and the Church of the New Testament. The meaning was there thus determined: "If you shall once (that which ye *will* do, ye shall do) destroy the temple of My body, and in and with it this outward temple, the symbol and pledge of the kingdom of God among you, then will I in three days raise up again the temple of My body, and in and with it the essence of the outward temple, the kingdom of God."

"That John," it was remarked, "assumed a close relation between the appearance of Christ and the temple, is evinced already in i. 14. That the identity of the outward temple and the kingdom of God was not far removed from the coarse

<sup>1</sup> Beiträge, Th. 3, S. 634. (Contributions to the Introduction to the Old Testament.)

understanding of the Jews, is shown by Mark xiv. 58, where the witnesses thus render the words of Christ: ὅτι ἐγώ καταλύσω τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον τὸν χειροποίητον, καὶ διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν ἄλλον ἀχειροποίητον οἰκοδομήσω. This rendering, apart from the malicious change of λύσατε into ἐγώ καταλύσω, is correct, but not complete. Of the three references, two only are apprehended; the third, to the body of Christ, is overlooked. This is made prominent by John in his mode of intimation, as being that which is least clear; and only a misapprehension of his usual manner in such cases, could mislead one to the opinion, that he intended to deny the two other references.

The signification of the temple is shown by the name, which it bore in its most ancient form, Ohel Moed,—the tabernacle of congregation, the place where God met with His people. Cf. Ex. xxv. 22, xxix. 43: “And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and he shall be sanctified by My glory.” Num. xvii. 4 (*Heb.* 19): “In the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with you.” Such a meeting was not merely a temporary one, when at the chief feasts the people assembled personally in the sanctuary. Rather does Jehovah ever meet with His people in the sanctuary. He is always there present, and ready to receive His own; and His own can come to Him spiritually and dwell with Him, even when personally they are far removed from the sanctuary. It is of significance in this reference, that in the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the temple, 1 Kings viii. 44, 48, it is promised, that the prayers of those also shall be heard, who are outwardly separated from the temple, but pray with the body and mind turned towards it. But Lev. xvi. 16 is decisive; for, according to this, all the children of Israel dwell spiritually with the Lord in His tabernacle, which consequently is no other than an embodiment of the Church.<sup>1</sup> Decisive, also, are many passages in the Psalms, in which it is designated as the highest privilege of believers, that they dwell with the Lord in His temple, and thus also dwell with Him, when they are personally far removed from it. Cf., e.g., Ps. lxxxiv. 4: “The bird hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, thine altars, O LORD of Sabaoth.”—The bird and swallow are an emblem of believers in their weakness and helplessness.—

<sup>1</sup> On this passage, which has been falsely interpreted by Bähr, cf. my Christology 2, S. 600. (Translation, iii. pp. 61, 62.)

Ver. 5 : "Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house ;" where the dwellers in the house of God are not "its constant visitors," but members of the household of God in a spiritual sense. Ps. xxvii. 4 : "One thing have I desired of the **LORD**, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the **LORD** all the days of my life." Ps. xxiii. 6 : "I dwell in the house of the **LORD** my whole life long." Ps. xv. 1, xxvii. 5, lxi. 4, "I will abide in Thy tabernacle for ever ;" lxiii. 2. In Ps. lii., a Psalm which, according to the superscription, was sung far from the sanctuary, it is said in ver. 8, "But I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God ;" and according to Ps. xcii. 13, all believers are planted in the house of the Lord. All these passages serve for a commentary to the name Ohel Moed, and show that the meeting together was at the same time a dwelling together, the intercourse being an unbroken one. In the prophets also, we find the same representation. "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire ? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings ?"—thus do the godless exclaim (Isa. xxxiii. 14), when terrified by the mighty judgments of the Lord. They do so from the conviction, that all Israelites dwell with the Lord, or in His sanctuary, cf. Ps. v. 4; and explain this privilege, according to the experience they have just had of the character of the Lord, as an extremely dangerous one. The temple appears as the spiritual dwelling-place of Israel also in Matt. xxiii. 38 : the house in which the Lord has hitherto dwelt with them is now to be left desolate, the presence of the Lord departing from it.

The temple being thus the symbol and pledge of the connection of God with His people, it will appear quite natural that the temple should occur repeatedly as a mere emblem of the Church. We find such passages even in the Old Testament. In Jer. vii. 14, the unbelieving covenant-people are upbraided for the assumption of the prerogative of the believing, of being the temple of the Lord. In Zech. vi. 12, it is said of the Messiah, "He shall build the temple of the Lord"—the Church.<sup>1</sup> In Zech. vii. 3 also, the Church of God is designated by the name of the house of God. In Eph. ii. 19, believers are declared to be of the household of God ; as for-

<sup>1</sup> Christology 3, 1, S. 313. (Trans. pub. by T. and T. Clark, iii. p. 356.)

merly the Jews only were, but now are also the Gentile Christians. The fact that the temple is now destroyed, does not alter the case, since it was only a symbol. Cf. vers. 21, 22; 1 Cor. iii. 16; 2 Cor. vi. 16; 1 Tim. iii. 15; 1 Pet. ii. 5.

The connection of God with His people having formed the heart of the sanctuary, this must have been not merely an emblem of the Church, but at the same time a type of the advent of Christ, in which this connection was truly completed, and in which the Church received its necessary foundation. In Christ, God dwelt truly and really among His people. He took upon Him flesh and blood among them and from them; and the Church of the New Testament is only the continuation of His appearance in the flesh, since to His own He is the true Immanuel always unto the end of the world. This typical relation of the temple to Christ is indicated not only by John, i. 14, but also by Paul in Col. ii. 9, i. 19.

The word, “destroy,” is not to be attenuated into a mere prediction of that which will be. It is to be placed under the same point of view as the command to Judas, “What thou doest, do quickly;” and the word in Matt. xxiii. 32, πληρώσατε τὸ μέτρον τῶν πατέρων ὑμῶν. When the Jews changed λύσατε into ἔγὼ καταλύσω, they had rightly discovered that Jesus attributed to Himself a causality in this; their wickedness consisted in entirely setting aside their own participation. No one disappoints God. What the sinner *will* do, that he *is* to do. “From this we may learn,” says Anton, “how the counsel of God manifests itself in such cases. It seems as though the Almighty gave this and that entirely into the power of men, as was especially the appearance in the Passion of Christ. Then His enemies rejoiced, and thought, Now all will be right.” We may doubtless say, that there is a sacred irony in the word λύσατε. They think to put a finishing stroke to the work of Christ, and are themselves only the instruments in His hand.

Ver. 20. “Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt Thou rear it up in three days?”—It is generally acknowledged that the temple here meant, is that of Herod, which was a complete renovation of the former, extending even to the foundations; but was undertaken gradually and in portions, so that this temple is represented generally, not

as a third, but only as a glorification of the second.<sup>1</sup> Herod conceived the plan of this renovation in the eighteenth year of his reign, and finished it, according to the statement of Josephus, in Book 15, 11, 5, 6 of his Antiquities, in nine and a half years. But, doubtless, new embellishments were continually being added afterwards, so that the building of the temple never entirely ceased. This is sufficient to explain the assertion of the Jews here; which is, of course, not to be considered as a strictly historical account. It was their interest to make the time as long as possible.

Ver. 21. "But He spake of the temple of His body."—The body of Christ is here put, according to the correct remark of Lampe, instead of His whole humanity, because over this alone was power granted to His enemies. If Christ is here designated as the true temple, as that to which the temple at Jerusalem is related only as the shadow to the substance, then in this is included the impending destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, or at least the removal of its essential quality; and thus the condemnation of those who dream of a restoration of this temple, since in the passages on which they found their dream, it is just this essential quality which is taken into view. On this side, our text is coincident with John iv. 23, as was already perceived by Luther: "But now in the New Testament, God has erected another temple, where God will dwell; that is, the dear humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. There will God be found, and nowhere else. He calls Christ's body the temple of God, wherein God dwells, in order that the hearts and eyes of all of us may be directed to Christ, that we may worship Him only who sits at the right hand of God in heaven.—God is no longer bound to one place, as He was at that time, when He would dwell at Jerusalem, before the true temple, the Lord Christ, came; as is said also in John iv. 23. The temple at Jerusalem has ceased to be; and now men may worship God at whatever place they may be, and turn their heart and eyes in faith to the person of Christ, where there is both God and man." In harmony with our text is Rev. xxi. 22, "And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the

<sup>1</sup> With regard to the temple erection of Herod, and its purpose, with reference to Hagg. ii. 7, cf. Christol. 3, 1, S. 237. (Trans. pub. by T. and T. Clark, iii. p. 274.)

temple of it." Here also Christ is the antitype of the temple,—He, on whose advent the continued existence of the temple became impossible; because the emblematic residence of God among His people, which formed the essential characteristic of the temple, had found its truth in Christ, and will find it most perfectly in the New Jerusalem. John also, in i. 14, hints at the typical relation in which the tabernacle and the temple stand to the appearance of Christ. When, elsewhere, the Church is represented as the antitype of the temple, there is no opposition to these passages; for the Church is the body of Christ, and in it are continued His theanthropic nature and rule. Not the Church in distinction from Christ is the temple of God, but the Church in so far as it is under Christ as its Head.

Ver. 22. "When therefore He was risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this unto them; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had said."—It is not said, that the disciples then first *understood* the declaration; but that then, when the fulfilment lay before them, it received a new meaning for them.—The belief in Scripture is placed before belief in this declaration, according to the usage of John, vii. 38, 42, x. 35, xiii. 18, and of the New Testament generally—belief in the Scriptures, viz., of the Old Testament: because the declaration of Christ received its full light and its correct meaning only by comparison with the Old Testament; without this solid basis, it would have been in suspense.<sup>1</sup> The resurrection of Christ also appears as testified by the Old Testament in xx. 9: οὐδέπω γέδεισαν τὴν γραφὴν, ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῆναι. According to 1 Cor. xv. 4, Christ rose on the third day "according to the Scripture." That the Apostles based their assumption of the Old Testament witness to the resurrection on the authority of Christ, is shown by Luke xxiv. 25, 26, and 44. Yet the former passage, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" indicates that the resurrection is not witnessed to directly in the Old Testament, but rather comes into consideration as necessarily intermediate between the Passion and the glory of Christ. We are led to the same result by the saying of Peter,

<sup>1</sup> Lampe: "Scripturam hanc conferebant cum verbis Christi atque ita ex collatione duplicitis predictionis cum implemento omnem dubitationem ansam sublatam videbant."

in 1 Pet. i. 11, that the Spirit of Christ in the prophets testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. When the matter is regarded from this point of view, the Old Testament contains testimonies to the resurrection in great abundance. They are found, according to the declaration of Christ, in Moses—here we must especially consider Gen. xl ix. 10; for without the resurrection, Christ cannot be the Shiloh, in whom Judah attains to the dominion of the world,—in the Psalms—*e.g.*, in Ps. cx., where Christ appears, sitting at the right hand of the Almighty, as the ruler over His enemies,—and in the prophets. All predictions in the latter concerning the Messiah in His glory, as Isa. ix. and xi., and Micah v., contain a guaranty of the resurrection. But those prophecies are especially to be considered, which place in contrast to the sufferings ending in death, the glory which should follow. In Isa. liii. the atoning death of the Servant of God is clearly taught. If now, in spite of and by means of this, He attains to great glory, so that the heathen are sprinkled by Him, and kings shut their mouths at Him, then the resurrection is a necessary postulate. In Zech. ix. 9, 10, the Messiah is represented first as the *lowly*, נָמֵן, and riding upon an ass; and then as He who speaks peace to the heathen, whose dominion is from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. Since the lowliness, according to xii. 10, xiii. 7, and chap. xi., is to end in death, the resurrection forms the necessary bridge between the two conditions. Besides the specific Messianic predictions, there is also a wide region of typical prophecy of the resurrection, as Ps. xvi., and of prophetic history.—It is of significance that the New Testament comprises all the books of the Old Testament under the name of *Scripture*. It thus intimates that these writings, though widely separated as to time, and different in their contents and manner, are yet connected by a powerful bond of union, being “given from one Shepherd,” Eccles. xii. 11; it also points to inspiration, and the unconditional authority resting upon it, which “cannot be broken.” Every eclectic position towards the Old Testament is thus by this designation cut up by the roots.

Vers. 23—25 form the transition to the conversation of Christ with Nicodemus, which, together with the purification of the temple, is the second great event in connection with

Christ's first Passover in Jerusalem. John, strictly speaking, gives an account of only these two facts. These verses serve only as a basis for the understanding of the conversation with Nicodemus.

Ver. 23. "Now, when He was at Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast, many believed in His name, when they saw the miracles which He did."—Lampe justly remarks, that the determination of the time shows clearly that the purification of the temple related in the previous verses, like that which pertains to the end of Christ's ministry, occurred before the beginning of the feast. This is in striking accordance with the supposition that the purification of the temple was coincident with the putting away of the leaven, which always preceded the commencement of the feast. Ex. xii. 15; 1 Cor. v. 7. The words, *at the Passover*, and, *in the feast* (cf. τὸ πάσχα ἡ ἑορτὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων, vi. 4), are not added without purpose. They indicate that the whole feast is meant, not merely the first day, on which the paschal lamb was eaten. The indication was the more necessary, as in the law the Passover means only the paschal lamb; the whole feast being called only the feast of unleavened bread, Lev. xxiii. 5, 6; Num. xxviii. 16, 17. Elsewhere the "feast of the Passover" is spoken of, John xiii. 1; Luke ii. 41. Most of the miracles were certainly performed on the later days of the feast. John mentions those miracles which evince how earnestly Jesus then already strove to gather the children of Jerusalem, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, Matt. xxiii. 37; also in John iv. 45. That he does not give a complete account of them, is explained by the circumstance, that they bear a similar character with those concerning which there is a sufficiently full narrative in the three first Gospels.—Those are here spoken of who believed in the *name* of Jesus. The name stands in close connection with the calling and renown. It is the compendium of the deeds: cf. Isa. lxiii. 14, "So didst Thou lead Thy people, to make Thyself a glorious name." Though the name remains externally the same with the accession of deeds, its character is essentially altered thereby. The name Jesus receives by the *miracles* a special emphasis, a different sound. That those persons are here spoken of who stood, like Nicodemus, in a doubtful position, is shown by comparison with iii. 2, the connection

of which with our text is by no means accidental. From this passage, and iv. 48, we perceive, that in the words, *when they saw*, etc., there is an intimation of the superficiality of their faith, which was still too dependent on its outward occasion, and was still too much confined to the sphere of reflection.

Vers. 24, 25. "But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man."—They believed,—that was evident; but their faith was not a solid one, on which one might build. It was to be feared that they would not be stedfast when the storm of public opinion began to rush and loudly roar against them. That would apply to them which is written in Matt. xiii. 20. They endure only for a time; but when tribulation and persecution arise, then immediately they are offended. Luther says: "That faith is still a milk-faith, and a young faith, of those who easily and precipitately assent and believe; and when they hear something which does not please them, or which they did not expect, they straight-way bound back again, and recur to their old dreams." What a background of alienation from the true doctrine was still concealed behind the foreground of turning to Christ, and of faith, is shown by the example of Nicodemus, who at first could not reconcile himself to, and would know nothing of, the simplest of all requirements, that of regeneration. For such as are still in inward dependence on public opinion, it is impossible long to offer a successful resistance to it. The words, *He did not commit Himself to them*, stand in close connection with, *they believed on Him*, and serve appropriately to limit it, and set it in the proper light. If their faith, which is nothing else but a confidence in Jesus, had been a well-grounded one, Jesus would also have trusted in them. The act of self-surrender must be a reciprocal one.—That Jesus did not commit Himself to them, means, that in intercourse with them He maintained a certain reserve, keeping always in view that the friends of the present might in the future become His enemies, and, as Lampe remarks, "verifying in His own example the wisdom of serpents, which, in Matt. x. 16, He requires of His disciples." The words presuppose that a dangerous opposition had already begun to show itself against Jesus, in harmony with ver. 18, the fact that Nicodemus came to Jesus by night, and with iv.

3, where, for the sake of security, Jesus removes from Judea into Galilee, where the Pharisees were less powerful. These must very soon have become aware, that between their system and the doctrine of Jesus there was an irreconcilable opposition.—Jesus knew all men, and knew what was in every man. We find a power of this kind in a much inferior degree in the prophets of the Old Testament. Luther says: “This the prophets indeed could do, since they sometimes knew by a revelation from God the proceedings and designs of one man towards another; even the designs of kings were not hidden from them, as it is recorded of Elisha, 2 Kings vi. 8 sq. But this he did not have of himself, but it was revealed to him by God,—*item*, he could not do this of all men, nor know all the thoughts of a single man; therefore, also, he could not know all men.” It is God’s privilege to try the hearts and reins, Ps. vii. 9; to know the hearts, Acts xv. 8; and to understand the thoughts afar off, Ps. cxxxix. 2. In this privilege Christ must participate in full measure, because He is the only-begotten Son of God. “He knew the people better than they were known, not only by others, but by themselves.”<sup>1</sup> “Christ,” says Calvin, “knows the very roots of the trees; we, on the other hand, know the character of the trees only by their fruits.” We are reminded by this how very much we should be on our guard against rocking ourselves to sleep in our self-sufficiency, since the judgment of Christ, according to which we shall be judged, may very easily be widely different from our own. A reflection of the gift of Christ here celebrated is certainly granted also to the Church; for, among the gifts mentioned in 1 Cor. xii. 10, is that of the discerning of spirits. Before him who has true faith many mists vanish, which conceal the true forms of persons from the world. “To this distinction of good and evil,” says the Berleburger Bibel, “even Christians otherwise simple may arrive, if they faithfully follow Christ, and are in earnest about it.” Even simple and uneducated

<sup>1</sup> Augustine: “Creator hominis noverat, quid esset in homine, quod ipse creatus homo non noverat. Nonne hoc probamus de Petro, quia non noverat, quid in ipso esset, quando dixit: tecum usque ad mortem? Audi quia Dominus noverat quid esset in homine: Tu tecum usque ad mortem;” etc. Beza: “Non mirum est, Christum nosse quod in hominibus est, nam conditor est hominum.”

Christians often cast piercing glances. But unconditional and unexceptional certainty is still a privilege of Christ alone, and the proposition still remains true: “de occultis non judicat ecclesia.” Meyer remarks: “The supernatural immediate knowledge of Jesus is often rendered especially prominent in John: i. 49, iv. 17, vi. 64, xi. 4, 15, xiii. 11, xxi. 17.” In this the Apocalypse is in harmony with the Gospel. “I know thy works,” is constantly repeated in the epistles to the churches. And in Rev. ii. 23 it is said, “And all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.”

## CHAP. III. 1-21.

## CHRIST'S CONVERSATION WITH NICODEMUS.

Ver. 1. “There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.”—That Nicodemus is mentioned as a representative of those who are spoken of in ii. 23-25, the striking accordance of the address of Nicodemus to Christ with the declaration, “Many believed in His name, when they saw the miracles which He did,” leaves no room for doubt. And it is no contradiction to this, that we afterwards find Nicodemus among the number of the genuine disciples of Christ. For the Lord ascribed real faith even to them; and even if He did not commit Himself to them, the reason for this was probably not their insincerity, but their indecision—their dualism, according to which their decision might result either for one side or the other. In Nicodemus the good side obtained the superiority. Only in consequence of the conversation with Christ did he come forward in the number of those to whom Christ could commit Himself.—The fact, that Nicodemus was a Pharisee, is of significance in this matter. It is the very characteristic of Pharisaism, that it knows no regeneration, but only a sanctity appropriated by fragments, in which the man has the *primas partes*, and God, in the main, only the regarding and the rewarding thereof. It was Pharisaism which had made the temple in a spiritual sense a house of merchandise, in which a profitable trade was carried on with God. Josephus says, that according to the doctrine of the Pharisees, it is for the most part (*κατὰ*

*τὸ πλεῖστον*) in the power of man to do right or wrong; and they taught further, that it depends on man's will, to act virtuously or criminally. They enveloped themselves entirely in a self-made holiness.—His position also as a “ruler of the Jews,” must have hindered, rather than promoted, the connection of Nicodemus with Christ. “When a man,” says the Berleburger Bibel, “is in great estimation, and all eyes are directed towards him, he has very great difficulty in becoming little, and in subjecting himself to others.” But this is not the only thing. In eminent positions, there is danger of one's anxiously striving to preserve himself in harmony with the disposition of the circle over which he is, from fear of otherwise losing “the praise of men,” xii. 43,—to enjoy which, soon becomes a need to those in high positions. Popularity easily becomes the idol of rulers. Since the pharisaic spirit then governed the masses of the people, it must have been very difficult for the rulers decidedly to confess Christ, who opposed this spirit from the beginning. Cf. xii. 42.—*Ἄρχοντες* are, in general, those who exercise any authority. The word is used in this general sense of chief men; e.g., in xii. 42; Luke xiv. 1; Matt. ix. 18, where the more particular intimation is given by Luke (viii. 41), that he was a president of the synagogue. But here it is not merely *ἀρχων*, but *ἀρχῶν τῶν Ἰουδαίων*, which could be said only of a member of the Chief Council of the nation. So also the phrase, “master of Israel,” in ver. 10. Even the mere phrase, *οἱ ἀρχοντες*, stands repeatedly of the members of the Sanhedrim, but only where the connection, or the case itself, renders the more particular definition unnecessary. So in Luke xxiii. 13, the *ἀρχοντες*, according to their juxtaposition with the *ἀρχιερεῖς*, are the lay associates of the Chief Council. So also in Luke xxiv. 20. In Acts xiii. 27, the *ἀρχοντες* can only be the members of the Sanhedrim; for it was these who condemned Christ. In John vii. 26, also, the *ἀρχοντες* are the Synedrists. To the rulers of the Jews here, correspond the *ἀρχοντες τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ πρεσβύτεροι τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ*, in Acts iv. 8, and the rulers of those who dwell in Jerusalem, in Acts xiii. 27. Nicodemus first appears as a member of the Chief Council in John vii. 50.

Ver. 2. “The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto Him, Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles which Thou doest, except God

be with him."—That John ascribes importance to the circumstance that Nicodemus came to Jesus by night, and perceives in this a characteristic memorial of the state of his heart at that time, is evident from the repeated reference to this circumstance in John vii. 50, xix. 39. The reason of his coming by night we derive, with probability, from the parallel designation of Joseph of Arimathea, in that second passage—"being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews." Any other reason can scarcely be thought of, if the coming by night was not a chance one. Cf. John xii. 42 also; according to which, many of the rulers believed on Christ, "but because of the Pharisees they did not confess [their belief], lest they should be put out of the synagogue." We perceive the root of this fear of man partly from John ii. 23–25, partly from Christ's conversation with Nicodemus itself. The fear of man can be overcome only where there is a living faith in Christ as the very Son of God, and Saviour of the world; and the foundation of such faith is a thorough knowledge of one's own misery, which impels one to seek in Christ the healing of the deep wounds of conscience. The fear of man is often falsely condemned,—that being taken for ordinary cowardice and dread of suffering, which is only a result of the lower stage of faith. So long as this remains, reserve is quite in order. When Nicodemus had taken to heart the contents of this conversation, he came forward as a confessor.—But we must not rest content with supposing that, in mentioning the coming of Nicodemus by night, John wished to refer only to his fear of man. It is quite in accordance with the manner of John, to perceive in this a symbol of the darkness which still enveloped the mind of Nicodemus,<sup>1</sup> and which made itself known in this very circumstance. The Lord Himself appears gently to hint at this in the close of the conversation, in ver. 19, where He speaks of darkness in the ethical sense. Night also occurs as the emblem of spiritual darkness in the word of the

<sup>1</sup> Augustine has already recognised in the coming of Nicodemus by night a type of his benighted heart, in connection with a quotation of Eph. v. 8. "Qui ergo renati sunt, noctis fuerunt et diei sunt: tenebræ fuerunt et lumen sunt. Jam credit se illis Jesus et non nocte veniunt at Jesum sicut Nicodemus, non in tenebris quærunt diem.—Quamvis ad Jesum venerit, tamen quia nocte venit, adhuc de tenebris carnis suæ loquitur. Non intelligit quod audit a domino, non intelligit quod audit a luce, quæ illuminat omnem hominem, i. 9."

Lord in John xi. 10; and when in xiii. 30, John says of Judas the traitor, "He went out, and it was night," he evidently recognised in the external night a symbol of the spiritual night, where the light of grace does not shine, and in which begins the power of darkness. In such spiritual interpretation of the night, the Apocalypse of John coincides with his Gospel. Cf. besides, Eph. v. 8, 1 Thess. v. 4, 5, where the condition of those who live out of Christ is represented as darkness and night, but the condition of believers as light and day. Anton well remarks, "He would not himself have known that there was still so much darkness in him, if he had not in this conference come to the light."—That Nicodemus came to Jesus by night, does not necessarily imply that the disciples of Jesus, especially the three most intimate, were not with Him. It was not these, but the Jews, that Nicodemus had to fear. It seems probable that, at a strange place like this, the disciples would assemble around Jesus in the evening. On a later occasion, Jesus spent the night with the disciples at Bethany, Matt. xxi. 17 sq., Mark xi. 11. Ver. 11 seems to intimate distinctly the presence of the disciples. By this remark is answered the question, From whence did John obtain so accurate a knowledge of the conversation? If we think of any one of the disciples as inseparable from Jesus, it is this one, especially in Jerusalem, where he had no business connected with his earthly calling.—Nicodemus says, *We know*. Light is thrown on this plural by chap. ii. 23–25. Nicodemus appears as the representative of those who had believed on Jesus because they saw the miracles which He did. We are led to a real plurality also by the parallel use of *οἴδαμεν* in ix. 24–30. Anton renders the plural too ideally when he paraphrases it: "By right we ought to know it, and by right we might all know it; and thus then I will address the conscience of the others." Yet there is in this an element of truth. Nicodemus certainly does not anxiously stop with those, of whom he knew by experience that they shared his point of view.—Behind the acknowledgment of Jesus as a teacher come from God, there is concealed the request to Jesus, that He would manifest Himself to him as a teacher—that He would impart to him the precepts, by following which he might attain to the Messianic kingdom. Only when this is perceived does the answer of Christ seem appropriate. That

which here is only intimated, appears in a more developed form in Matt. xix. 16 (Luke xviii. 18) : “ And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life ? ” From the same analogous case, we perceive also what kind of teaching it was that Nicodemus expected from Jesus: the application of certain extraordinary performances, whereby he might increase the already existing treasure of his holiness, and thus render himself a worthy candidate for the kingdom of heaven.—It was a good beginning, when Nicodemus, on the ground of His miracles, acknowledged in Jesus a teacher come from God. He did this not in the sense of Rationalism, which exalted the teacher in order to set aside the king and the high priest, and in truth rejected not less the teacher. He recognised in the teacher one of absolute authority. The Messiah appears as the “ Teacher of righteousness ” in Joel ii. 23 ;\* and in Isa. lv. 4 it is said, “ Behold, I have given Him for a witness to the people.” But when Nicodemus remained content with Christ as the teacher, especially the moral teacher, this was an unsatisfactory point of view, from which he could not solve the particular problem appointed for the members of the kingdom of God, viz., of regeneration.<sup>1</sup> —That in Christ Nicodemus recognised the Messiah, cannot well be doubted. He was one of those who believed in the name of Christ, ii. 23 ; and John would hardly have attributed such a faith to those who had not yet found the right answer to the fundamental question. When he salutes Christ as the Teacher (concerning the address Rabbi, which elsewhere proceeds from those who were perfectly convinced of the Messiahship of Jesus, see the remarks on i. 39), only that side of the nature of Christ is rendered prominent, in harmony with his personal need, which had relation to the hearts of the covenant-people. Viewed from

\* [Luther's Version. Cf. Christology of the Old Test. Trans. pub. by T. and T. Clark, i. p. 319 sqq.]

<sup>1</sup> Quesnel says, beautifully and profoundly, “ Jesus est vraiment le docteur de la vraie justice, promis par les écritures et annoncé par les prophètes ; mais il l'enseigne bien d'une autre manière, que ne l'entend ce sénateur ; puisqu'il le fait en la mettant dans le cœur, et lui en donnant la jouissance et l'amour. Il ne l'enseigne pas seulement de la part de Dieu ; mais il l'enseigne en Dieu ; et Dieu n'est pas seulement avec lui, il est Dieu lui-même. Enseignez moi aussi, O Jesus, mon sauveur, mon maître et mon Dieu.”

without, he may be at the same time Judge, Ruler, Lawgiver, and He who wholly reverses the relation of Israel to the heathen world.

Ver. 3. “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”—Why does Jesus commence directly with regeneration? Chiefly on this account, because opposition to the view of Nicodemus led to this: It is not, as thou supposest, a question of some new fruits, but of new roots, of life; not of a moral reformation, but of a fundamental renovation; not of the adoption and following of single prescriptions, but of a new sphere of existence. But also, because the doctrine of human depravity, and the consequent necessity of regeneration, forms the basis for all other doctrines, which Christ, as the teacher come from God, had to communicate. Not until the need of redemption has been called forth by this doctrine, is there the proper receptivity for the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, of His atonement, and of the signification of faith. The Lord Himself refers to this, when in ver. 12 He designates earthly things as more accessible than heavenly. “The knowledge of the depravity of our nature,” says Quesnel, “and the necessity of being renewed by Jesus Christ, are the *first elements* of the Christian religion.”—The strong asseveration (cf. on *ἀμὴν*, *ἀμὴν*, at i. 22) presupposes ignorance of this great truth, and resistance to its acknowledgment, as was intimated in the words of Nicodemus, and was fully discerned by Him who knew what was in man. It is a deeply humbling truth. On this account, the man resolves with difficulty on allowing its application. When it is accepted, all boasting is excluded. The entire edifice of imagined excellence falls into ruins. Everything loses its importance, which one believes himself to have worked out in a long life of rectitude. He is thrown back at once to the point at which he first entered into life. If we specially regard Nicodemus, this point was for him a truly tragical one; there was nothing left of him. The Jew, who as such already supposed himself to have a share in the kingdom of God (the Talmud, in the Tract Sanhedrin, adduces this very proposition: all Israel has a part in the future world)—the Pharisee, the separate, whose peculiar character consisted in regarding himself as better than other people—member of the Chief Council—the reputation

of being a particularly virtuous man, and the zealous endeavour to be such,—all seemed to be suddenly consumed to a small heap of ashes. He must be born over again ; it is as though he had not yet been born at all. Here the word of God verily proves itself to be sharper than any two-edged sword. The serious question arises, whether it were not better to renounce the kingdom of God, than to seek it at such a price. And one may indeed avoid, at an apparently easier price, such a vast requirement. Nicodemus certainly took serious counsel within himself, whether he should not retract his declaration : “ Master, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God.”—In the form in which the requisition is made, there is yet a certain indulgence. Jesus pronounces the sentence generally ; He does not say directly, Thou must be born again. The Lord uses the more direct personal address in ver. 7.—With respect to *ἄνωθεν*, there was a difference of interpretation even in the times of the Church Fathers. Chrysostom says, Some render *ἄνωθεν* by, *from heaven*; others, by *from the beginning*. Etymologically, both renderings are admissible. *Ἄνωθεν, from above*, Matt. xxvii. 51, John xix. 23, occurs in the sense of *from heaven*, in John iii. 31, xix. 11, Jas. i. 17, iii. 15, 17; with the meaning of *from the first*, Luke i. 3, where it corresponds to the *ἀπ' ἀρχῆς* in ver. 2, Acts xxvi. 5, Gal. iv. 9, where *πάλιν* and *ἄνωθεν* occur in connection with each other, as also in Wisdom xix. 6. According to the latter rendering, *ἄνωθεν* calls attention to the fact, that an entirely new beginning must be made, in opposition to the opinion, that only a continued building on the ground of nature is needed. It favours this rendering, in the first place, that the *δεύτερον* in the answer of Nicodemus corresponds to the *ἄνωθεν* here,—a ground which cannot be set aside by such remarks as these : “ Nicodemus understood only so much of the discourse of Jesus, that he comprehended that a second birth was meant ;” or, “ Nicodemus did not understand *ἄνωθεν* as *δεύτερον*, but not at all.” Moreover, the phrase, to come down, or come from above, certainly occurs ; but it is doubtful whether it can be said : to be born from above ;—*from above* must then mean, by an influence coming down from above. But it is of decisive significance, that all the parallel passages speak of a being born again,—none, of a being born from above. The Lord Himself speaks, in Matt. xix. 28, of the regeneration of the earth, which presupposes the

regeneration of the human race. Baptism is designated as the washing of regeneration in Tit. iii. 5. The *ἀναγεννήσας* in 1 Pet. i. 3, *ἀναγεννημένοι* in 1 Pet. i. 23, is of the more significance, since *ἀνά* in the verbs compounded with it, is akin to *ἄνω*, *over again*, denuo. *Κανὴ κτίσις* also, in 2 Cor. v. 17, corresponds to *ἄνωθεν* in the meaning of *over again*. Finally, the rendering of regeneration is the oldest: it is found in the ancient Syriac translation, and already in Justin Martyr, who wrote about half a century after the composition of this Gospel, and in his first Apology, § 61, thus quotes our text: *ἀν μὴ ἀναγεννηθῆτε, οὐ μὴ εἰσέλθητε εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν*. From all this, there can be no doubt as to the meaning of *ἄνωθεν*. It contains the severest indictment of human nature, on whose soil no fruits of righteousness can flourish, and which needs an absolute transformation.<sup>1</sup> Regeneration is distinguished from *μετάνοια* by this, that in it the requirement of a permutation into an entirely new being is laid down more rigorously, and addition to that which already exists is more distinctly excluded. Anton: "This way of proceeding is a heavy cross to man. He is not willingly in a school, where his nothingness is presented before him; for man wishes notwithstanding to be nonnihil, something."

Ver. 4. "Nicodemus saith unto Him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?"—Nicodemus has been charged with a foolish misapprehension, being said to have understood the words of Christ of a second natural birth. Such stupidity would render it inexplicable, that Christ should have entered more deeply on the subject with him. He rather gives the answer, which will always be given by one who has passed a long life in the element of mere nature, even under the sporadic influences of grace, when the requisition is first made to him of a radical renovation of life. An elderly man is on the whole, and for the most part, what he is. He meets such demands with the consciousness, I am this; and they seem to him not much otherwise than if one should demand of a forest-tree that

<sup>1</sup> Calvin: "Verbo renascendi non partis unius correctionem, sed renovationem totius naturae designat, unde sequitur, nihil esse in nobis nisi vitiosum. Nam si in toto et singulis partibus necessaria est reformatio, corruptionem ubique diffusam esse oportet."

it should become a fruit-tree. He can, indeed, in detail, by the exertion of all his powers, and with the aid of God and His Spirit, with which Nicodemus could not have been unacquainted, strive to improve and mend himself; but to "be born," to enter into an entirely new sphere of existence, this, according to his conception, is impossible. In order to this, his existence must begin entirely over again; he must come into the world as another, even from his mother's womb, since the most of that, which has been afterwards developed and consolidated, is based on that which the man brought with him into the world; and since this, as a matter of course, is impossible, the requirement of regeneration is a visionary one, and He who has made it must take it back again. (Heumann: "This is, indeed, an impossibility. Am I then on this account to be excluded from the kingdom of God?") The requirement is an impossible thing, because it contends against nature. When this has once attained to consistency, when all has assumed a fixed form, a total change is no longer possible. Thus must Nicodemus have judged, so long as he had not yet heartily believed, and become by faith a partaker of the whole riches of Christ, and had learnt by experience His divinity, the power of His atonement, and the might of His Spirit. Nicodemus says this, however, not as a cold rationalist, one who will ward off the truth from him at any price; he says it with a quaking heart. He has come to Christ, presuming Him to be the teacher sent from God. And the word of Christ has, indeed, raised a doubt on the surface of his heart, but in its inmost depths has strengthened his conviction. It has pierced like a flash of lightning into the night of his soul; it has found an ally in his conscience, which loudly assures him that this seemingly impossible thing must yet be, if he will see the kingdom of God.

Ver. 5. "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."—The Lord repeats, against the contradiction of Nicodemus, what He had said before; but in such a manner that He more distinctly indicates the factors of the new life, which is the irremissible condition of a participation in the kingdom of heaven. There are decisive reasons for the supposition, that by the water, which is mentioned as one

of these factors, is to be understood the water of *baptism*. Already, in ver. 22, we find the disciples of Jesus baptizing under His commission ; and it is natural to suppose that the doctrinal basis is here given for this activity.<sup>1</sup> In John i. 33, moreover, water and Spirit are likewise mentioned, and the water is that of baptism. The same is true also of Matt. iii. 11, and of ver. 16 : as Jesus went up out of the water, the Spirit of God descended upon Him. What there occurred to Christ, is emblematic for believers. In Acts ii. 38, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost,”—in the same manner, *water* and *Spirit*, *baptism* and *Spirit*, are connected with each other. As here *water* appears as one of the factors, and as a fundamental condition of regeneration, so in a very similar relation appears *baptism*, in the passage closely connected with our text, Tit. iii. 5, where it is designated as *λοντρὸν παλιγγενεστὰς καὶ ἀνακαίνωσεως πνεύματος ἄγιον*. Now, if these reasons decidedly forbid that we should here separate water from baptism (cf. besides, Eph. v. 26, *καθαρίσας τῷ λοντρῷ τοῦ ὑδατος*), there are again other reasons as distinctly in favour of the view, that the water here has a symbolical character, and typifies the forgiveness of sins. Water, as here used, is not to be distinguished from the water in a whole series of passages in the Psalms and prophets, in which it signifies the forgiveness of sins, which was already typified in the symbolism of the Mosaic law by material purification. David says, in Ps. li. 2, “Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.” The prayer is for the forgiveness of sins. The further unfolding of this prayer is given in vers. 9-11. In vers. 12-14 the impartation of the second thing is then prayed for, which necessarily follows from the granting of the first, the impartation of the sanctifying grace of God. As here, so also there, water and Spirit are in close connection with each other. If water there signifies the forgiveness of sins, then here also it has this meaning. In Isa. lii. 15, “So shall He sprinkle many nations,” the sprinkling evidently has the signification of absolution from sin. In Ezek. xxxvi. 25 it is said, “Then will I

<sup>1</sup> Chemnitz has already said : “Quia Christus mox inchoaturus erat cærimoniam baptismi per discipulos, sicut in Evangelista sequetur, ideo præmittit doctrinam de regeneratione ex aqua et spiritu.”

sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean : from all your filthiness, and from all your idols (filth), will I cleanse you." We have in substance the meaning of this passage in Jer. xxxi. 34, "For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." To this first benefit is added, in ver. 26, as the second, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you ; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." Here also water in the sense of forgiveness, and the impartation of the Spirit, go hand in hand. In Zech. xiii. 1 it is said, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." It is evident that here also water signifies the forgiveness of sins.

How now are these two views, that water, according to the one series of reasons, must signify baptism, and according to the other, the forgiveness of sins, to be united ? The answer is : Water is baptism, and at the same time the embodied forgiveness of sins. For the essence of baptism consists in this, that it brings with it the forgiveness of sins. The water of baptism signifies the forgiveness of sins, but not in such a manner that this exists independently of it ; and is only typified by it (as Olshausen is of opinion, that the water does not refer to the sacrament, but to the *idea* of baptism, to the inward occurrence of repentance in the soul), but so that the forgiveness of sins is connected with the water. The water appears in like manner with the Spirit as a factor of the new life. When this seems, in ver. 6, to be derived from the Spirit alone, we must supplement to this from ver. 5, that the Spirit, which is the positive factor of the new life, presupposes the water, as already in the Old Testament the forgiveness of sins is represented as the really fundamental benefit. The water is the seal of access to the Spirit. When the Berleburger Bibel thus paraphrases the sense : "If one should rely solely on his baptism by water, if he should neglect the new birth, and should not allow the renewing of the Holy Spirit to take place within him, then he could not enter into the kingdom of God," this is not to *unfold*, but to *infold*, in the spiritualistic interest. The water is not here to be depreciated, but to be recommended with respect to the baptism shortly to be accomplished, and to be designated as the

vehicle of the forgiveness of sins, the necessary precondition and the sure guaranty of the impartation of the Spirit.—That the declaration of the Lord now before us, which was referred to baptism already with perfect confidence by Justin, Apol. i. 61, is opposed to the doctrine of the Reformed Church concerning baptism, is seen from the manifold attempts of Reformed expositors, even of the best and most pious, to explain the water otherwise,—attempts on which the stamp of worthlessness is already impressed by the fact, that they have never been able to arrive at any agreement. According to Calvin, e.g., the water is the Holy Ghost Himself, who is thus named from His purifying and animating power; according to Lampe, it is the obedience of Christ, etc. Buddeus did not make use of too strong an expression when he called these expositions *frivolas plane atque absonas*.—The prominence of the water must have been a fatal blow to the Pharisee in Nicodemus. Nicodemus was to reflect, remarks Anton, “for what purpose natural water is used, namely, for washing; and thus further to recognise what that filth must be, which must be first washed away.”—Our declaration does not lose its practical importance, even for those who have already attained to regeneration of water and Spirit. “It is this new birth,” remarks Quesnel, “which gives us the right to turn unceasingly to the author of our new existence, and to the principle of our new life, and on every occasion to desire from Him His new Spirit.”

Ver. 6. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”—The presupposition is, that only the spiritual can be true members of the kingdom of God, which is spirit. But such a position cannot be attained by the way of nature. Of that which is fleshly only the fleshly, of sinners only the sinner, can be born. (Berleburger Bibel: “Thou hast indeed the wretched bodily birth in thee, but thou canst not by it enter into the kingdom of heaven.”) Therefore, together with the bodily, there is needed a higher, spiritual birth. The doctrine which our Lord here lays down, is clearly presented also in the Old Testament. Adam begets a son after his image, and in his likeness, Gen. v. 3; therefore, after his fall, a sinner like him. David says, in Ps. li. 5, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me:” he confesses, that even at his birth, yea, even at his conception, he was tainted

with sin. In Job xiv. 4 it is said, “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.” Cf. Gen. viii. 21; Ps. lviii. 3.—Philippi, in his Glaubenslehre 3, S. 200, says, “When it is said, that that which is born of flesh is flesh, by this is meant not merely the material human nature as the seat of the depraved human inclinations. This limitation is the less justified in the present connection of thought, since Nicodemus is the representative of Pharisaism, which, in opposition to Sadduceeism, did not seek after sensual pleasure, but after righteousness in good works; which legal striving must, therefore, likewise be comprehended under  $\sigma\acute{a}\rho\xi$ .” The  $\sigma\acute{a}\rho\xi$ , he continues, designates not only the sensuous human nature, but human nature in general, as comprising both sense and spirit, and indeed human nature in its present character; therefore, corrupt, spiritual-sensuous human nature. Hence in Gal. v. 19, 20, sins of selfishness, as much as sins of sensuality, are adduced as works of the flesh; and in Col. ii. 18, even the puffed-up mind of a hyper-spiritual ascetic, who is bent on annihilating his sensuality, is designated as a *fleshly* mind. From these reasons it is concluded, that “ $\Sigma\acute{a}\rho\xi$  signifies man as he is by nature, before regeneration by the Spirit;” or, as Wieseler says on Gal. v. 13, “ $\sigma\acute{a}\rho\xi$  is the sinful nature of man, both bodily and spiritual.” But when it is shown by such reasons that  $\sigma\acute{a}\rho\xi$  cannot possibly denote mere “sensuality,” that it comprehends the whole range of human corruption; yet thus, on the other hand, there is still wanting an answer to the question, why then the whole of the old man is thus, without further explanation, designated by the flesh,—a designation which, according to that rendering, cannot at all be justified as an *a priori* one. Further, if every special reference to the bodily side of human existence is set aside in the use of  $\sigma\acute{a}\rho\xi$ , it is not explained, why, in Gal. v. 19–21, the series of the works of the flesh is opened and concluded by those very sins in which the reference to the bodily side is quite manifest; as fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, at the commencement,—drunkenness and revilings, at the end. That  $\sigma\acute{a}\rho\xi$  always has a special reference to the material nature, is evident also from this, that instead of *flesh* simply, the designation *flesh and blood* repeatedly occurs; cf. on i. 13; and that *body* is repeatedly substituted for *flesh*, as in Rom. viii. 13:  $\epsilon\acute{i} \delta\acute{e} \pi\nu\acute{e}\mu\acute{m}a\tau\acute{i} \tau\acute{a}s \pi\rho\acute{a}\xi\acute{e}\iota s \tau\acute{o}\nu \sigma\acute{a}\mu\acute{m}a\tau\acute{o}\nu\tau\acute{e}, \zeta\acute{h}\sigma\acute{e}\sigma\theta\acute{e}$ . According to

Rom. viii. 10, the *σῶμα* even of the regenerate still remains the abode of sin, which from thence continually incites the spirit. This is explicable only, when greater importance is attributed to corporeality with respect to sin, than is done by those who understand by *flesh* alone the “sinful nature of man.” The “body of death” also, in Rom. vii. 24, and the “law in the members,” in ver. 23, are hardly compatible with such a conception. What is then the correct solution of the problem? Sin has its starting-point not in the flesh, but in the spirit. The temptation of our first parents was directed to the spirit. So also the temptation of Christ. Regeneration also must proceed from the spirit. The Apostle, in Eph. iv. 23, requires the renewing of the inner man, or of the spirit of the mind, in proof that from thence sin has taken its origin, that there is its real source. But what renders sin so dangerous for man, as a being of both body and spirit, is, that the impulses proceeding from the spirit make an impression upon the flesh, the material nature; that sin gradually becomes fixed in this, and from thence incites the spirit, making it at last a wretched slave, sold under sin. This is true not merely of lust and drunkenness—when the Apostle says, in 1 Cor. vi. 18, φεύγετε τὴν πορνείαν πᾶν ἀμάρτημα δὲν ποιήσῃ ἀνθρώπος, ἐκτὸς τοῦ σώματός ἐστιν ὁ δὲ πορνεύων, εἰς τὸ ἴδιον σῶμα ἀμαρτάνει, this is only spoken by way of comparison; in fornication, the body has the most direct and immediate part—it is true also of anger, pride, avarice, envy, etc. All these sins are accompanied by corporeal excitement, and transfer themselves, as it were, to the body. This is the truth contained in the physiognomy of Lavater, in the phrenology of Gall, and similar theories. If it were otherwise, the connection of the body and spirit would be reduced to a purely external, mechanical one; and it would also appear strange, that Holy Scripture designates sin with so much preference, according to its bodily expression. Sinful impulses exist in the material nature, also, in consequence of original sin: how otherwise could there be family sins, which can yet be propagated only by physical generation? We may see from the very stubbornness of such sins, how dangerous a part the flesh plays in the sphere of sin.

Ver. 7. “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Y<sup>e</sup> must be born again.”—Such wonder Nicodemus had expressed in ver. 4. Jesus,

as the searcher of hearts, perceived that it still remained. But probably also it was to be read in his looks. The word *Ye* refers back to *we know* in ver. 2. Nicodemus had come forward as the representative of his associates in sentiment, and supposed that Jesus would accept in glad surprise, and without examination, the homage which these offered to Him. Jesus intimates, to his and their confusion, that with them as they are, He can have nothing whatever to do.—Ver. 8. “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” Luther: “As thou canst not by thy reason understand the wind, what it is; and although thou already distinctly hearest the roaring of it, yet canst not know or observe either its beginning or its ending—how far from thee it began, or how far beyond thee it ceaseth: so, much less canst thou comprehend by thy reason, how regeneration takes place.” That the point of comparison is singly and alone the incomprehensibility, and that those are in error who assume a threefold point of comparison,—1. the free self-determination of the Holy Spirit; 2. the experience of His operation on the part of man; 3. its “nevertheless incomprehensible character;” that it is improper to draw a parallel between the “voice” of the wind, and the fruits of the spirit, or good works, and that the thought is simply this: Do not allow thyself to take exception to the undeniable fact of regeneration, because thou canst not comprehend how it takes place;—all this is shown by the Old Testament passage, Eccles. xi. 5, “As thou knowest not what is the way of the wind [*Eng. Vers. spirit*], or of the bones in the womb of her that is with child; so thou knowest not the works of God, that maketh all.”<sup>1</sup> The bones can only be regarded here according to their invisibility; and so also, in the case of the wind, the point of comparison can be only its unaccountable, incomprehensible, mysterious character.—It is not here intended to set a limit to scientific investigation with respect to the wind. If we should succeed in learning its general laws, this passage would still remain untouched. It is not the wind in general which is here spoken of, but this or that wind, and that which presents itself at first view, as is shown by the analogy of the second comparison

<sup>1</sup> Lampe: “Ad quem locum respexisse Servatorem vix dubitandum est, quia in ipso quoque arcana venti et generationis conjunguntur.”

in the Old Test. passage. Anton : “One may indeed know whether the wind comes from the east or from the west, and consequently whither it goeth ; but no one can precisely determine where it first began, how far it shall at this time extend, or where it shall cease.—And yet thou hast no doubt in the matter ; thou dost not say on this account, I imagine that there is a wind. So the regenerate knows that he is changed, but he knows not how the change took place.”<sup>1</sup> It is not intended to awaken a sense for the spiritual miracle by the indication of a miracle in the visible world, but the aim is only to give to the thought an intuitively intelligible expression.—*Πνεῦμα* occurs very seldom of the wind : in the LXX., Gen. viii. 1 ; Eccles. xi. 5 ; in the New Testament, only Heb. i. 7, and there not quite certainly. Here, however, the infrequent designation is chosen on account of the comparison with the Spirit, as whose symbol the wind occurs also in Ezek. xxxvii. 9. Cf. Christology 2, S. 590. [Translation, iii. p. 54.] On the same symbolism rests, besides Acts ii. 2, also John xx. 22, where the Lord *breathes* upon His Apostles, and says, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” The interpretation of the Spirit is wrecked even on the Old Test. passage, and then on the *οὐτῶς*. *Πνέω* also stands only of the wind, vi. 18, Rev. vii. 1. The words, “where it listeth,” indicate that the motion of the wind is free, various, and incalculable.

Ver. 9. “Nicodemus answered and said unto Him, How can these things be ?” Ver. 10. “Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou the master of Israel, and knowest not these things ?”—*The teacher* is more emphatic than where merely *a teacher* is spoken of. The article indicates, that in Nicodemus the ideal personage of the teacher of Israel has become concrete ; the single member of this profession represents the whole of the profession. It is a similar instance, when, in 1 Sam. xvii. 58, to the question of Saul, “Whose son art thou ?” David answers, “*The son of thy servant Jesse,*”—all the sons of Jesse being represented to Saul by David.—So, also, when in Hagg. i. 13, Haggai is called the *angel* of the Lord ; and when Jesus, in John x. 11, says, “I am the Good Shepherd,”—*i. e.*, In My person the Good Shepherd is represented. The reproving

<sup>1</sup> Calvin : “In summa, ne dubitemus Spiritu Dei nos refungi ac fieri novos homines, quamvis agendi modus nos lateat.”

address of our Lord requires that the doctrine of regeneration should be clearly presented in the Old Testament; and the severity of the rebuke leads to the conclusion, that it refers not merely to a chapter of the prophetic theology, but to what could and should have been experienced even under the Old Covenant. And in reality the doctrine of regeneration is clearly presented in the Old Testament; and the fact, that Nicodemus knew nothing of it, ought the less to perplex us, since neither Pelagius knew anything of it, nor did Kant, nor did Wegscheider. The necessity of regeneration is founded in the fundamental conceptions of the Old Testament. A religion which teaches with such absolute clearness and exactness, on the one hand, the deep and innate depravity of the human heart, and, on the other, the loftiest ideality of moral requirements, cannot do without regeneration. Circumcision of the heart is only another expression for regeneration; and this is laid down even in the books of Moses, Deut. x. 16, xxx. 6, as the necessary mark of all true members of God's people. Of Saul it is said, in 1 Sam. x. 9, "And it was so, that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart;" and of David, in 1 Sam. xvi. 13, "Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." After his grievous fall, David says, in Ps. li. 10, "*Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.*" He perceives that nothing can be effected by a mere reformation,—that it needs the development of the same creative power, which God's Spirit once displayed, when in the beginning He moved upon the face of the waters. Regeneration as a doctrine and a fact is as old as the ancient Covenant itself. We meet it, as it were, bodily in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. If it seems to be pointed out first in several passages prophetic of the coming of the Messianic period, this is explained by the circumstance, that not until this period were the conditions of regeneration to come fully into life, or the powers operating in it to attain to their fullest development. The principal passages here are: Ezek. xi. 19, "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh," in the place of the natural heart, which, with respect to God, is as

hard as stone, insensible and unsusceptible; xviii. 31, xxxvi. 26; Jer. iv. 4, xxxi. 33. Whilst, therefore, in substance, the New Testament doctrine of regeneration is variously intimated in the Old Testament, with respect to the expression, *regeneration*, we find a pre-intimation of it only in two Old Testament passages: in Job xi. 12, “For vain man would be wise, and the wild ass be born a man,” in the sense of, *qui natus est onager, fiat homo per novam nativitatem*; and in Ps. lxxxvii., the theme of which is, Zion in the future the birth-place of the nations; here they shall be born anew, as children of God and children of Abraham.

Ver. 11. “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.”—The plural *οἱ δαμεν*, here, corresponds to the plural *οἱ δαμεν* in ver. 2, and stands in opposition to it; as can be the less mistaken, since the *ὑμᾶς* of the Lord, in ver. 7, referred to this plural, and since the *οὐ λαμβάνετε, οὐ πιστεύετε*, immediately following, also have regard to it. Now, since the plural there designates a real plurality, this must be the case here also. It cannot be doubted who is here meant, besides Jesus. “The divine messengers of former times, especially John the Baptist,” would have been more particularly designated. The conclusion that they are meant, can be arrived at only by expedients of which there is no intimation in the Scripture. The most natural thought is of the disciples personally present. We perceive Jesus to be accompanied by these always from i. 40 onwards; they being designated as His followers by the *ἀκολούθει μοι* in i. 44, cf. ii. 2, 11, 12, 17, iii. 22. We can scarcely doubt that they were here collected around Jesus. The supposition, that Christ here spoke in the plural of Himself alone, according to the manner of princes, is opposed even by the form of the expression. The declaration contains nothing which has reference to Christ’s prerogative, but only what applies also to the Apostles, and what John elsewhere attributes to himself. Cf. xix. 35, and the introduction to 1 John—*δὲ ἀκηκόαμεν, δὲ ἐωράκαμεν, ἀπαγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν*,—and in Rev. i. 2, *δὲ ἐμαρτύρησε τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃσα εἶδε*, on which the remark is made in my commentary, “John does not speak of himself, but only *witnesses* to the word of God, as it was certified to him by the testimony of Jesus Christ. By the

words, *that he saw*, his own invention, or the intermingling of a luxuriant subjectivity, is entirely excluded." In the main, that only is expressed which the whole true Church of Christ may declare together with her Lord, and which especially every upright teacher may repeat after Him.—The Lord expresses mainly a fact, a great privilege, which belongs to the Church, in opposition to the wisdom of the world with its lively speculations. The disciples could then already speak of regeneration from experience, and not as the blind of colour. The germ of regeneration had been already sunk deep in their hearts. That, in general, from the first commencement of their relation to Christ, they began to speak what they knew, and to testify what they had seen, is evident from i. 42, 46; so that the objection of Lampe to the conjoint reference of the declaration to the disciples, "sed illi nondum testabantur," does not hold. To believe and confess, to know and to speak, to see and to testify, are closely and inseparably connected with each other. In the declaration, however, is implied a parænesis. He who is tempted to bring forward his own fancies, must be terrified in view of these words of Christ.

Ver. 12. "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?"—A strikingly coincident parallel passage is Wisdom ix. 16, *καὶ μόλις εἰκάζομεν τὰ ἐπὶ γῆς, καὶ τὰ ἐν χερσὶν εὑρίσκομεν μετὰ πόνουν τὰ δὲ ἐν οὐρανοῖς τις ἔξιχνιασε.* The difference, however, is this,—that in this passage the earthly things belong to the sphere of nature, while in our text a distinction is made even between the earthly and the heavenly in religious matters. We can be in no doubt as to what is here meant by heavenly things, since the triple mention of heaven in ver. 13, plainly shows that we have there a further disclosure concerning this point. We must accordingly suppose doctrines like that of the divinity of Christ. That by earthly things is chiefly meant regeneration, is evident from the fact, that the Lord had previously spoken of this, *ἐπον ὑμῖν*. Regeneration pertains to earthly things, notwithstanding that its operating principle, the Holy Spirit, vers. 5, 6, is a supernatural one. Its basis is insight into the natural character of man—his deep depravity. This is an earthly fact. He who has first clearly perceived this, and in whom, in consequence, a longing after a higher

stage of existence has been awakened, he has already made an important progress in the understanding of regeneration. (It may also be said that ἐπίγειον is the recognition of the *necessity* of regeneration. Cf. ver. 7, δεῖ ὑμᾶς γεννηθῆναι ἀνωθεν.) Essentially otherwise is it with heavenly things,—the divinity of Christ, ver. 13; the plan of redemption by Him, vers. 14, 15. These can be accessible only when clearness has been attained with respect to the earthly things. Experience shows that belief in the divinity of Christ and His atonement disappeared from the Church directly when it failed in the recognition of human depravity.—The words, *ye believe not*, are not to be taken absolutely with respect to Nicodemus. For then the Lord would not have told him the heavenly things in what follows. This would be to preach to deaf ears. And then it must be taken into view, that from ver. 9 onwards, all remonstrance from Nicodemus ceases. He is dumb, because the truth has touched his heart. He by his silence says, with Job, “Behold, I am vile: what shall I answer Thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken, but I will not answer; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further.” With this declaration, which must have struck the more severely, since Nicodemus had begun with the confession, that Christ is a teacher come from God, and had therefore bound himself to accept without examination what He offered him, the Saviour gave the last blow to the dying unbelief of Nicodemus. In the subsequent history, he is represented as a believer in Christ. We cannot doubt that he became so by means of the present discourse. The point of decision, however, is designated by his silence, which is the more significant, since the Lord had severely attacked him in vers. 10–12. Especially ver. 10, spoken to a member of the Chief Council, must have brought about a decision either for the one side or the other. Anton: “These must have been real thorns in the heart of Nicodemus; now, however, he is submissive and perfectly quiet. But Christ must proceed still further with him.”

Ver. 13. “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven” (who will ascend to heaven).—That the Lord does not here attest the certainty of His knowledge in religious matters (Meyer: “And no other than I can reveal the heavenly

things to you ;” De Wette : “ To be taken in a metaphorical sense, of knowing—the bringing down, as it were, of that which is in heaven”), but rather passes thus from the statement of earthly things to the statement of heavenly things, in which the earthly have their roots, is evident, besides from the inadmissibility, to be proved directly, of the figurative rendering of the ascending to heaven, from the manifest reference also in which the triple mention of heaven here stands to the heavenly things, the *ἐποντάνια*. Among the heavenly things, the true divinity of Christ takes the first place in the doctrine of salvation. For this is the foundation of the atonement instituted by Him. On this rests the forgiveness of sins which is sealed by baptism, and on this also the impartation of the Holy Spirit. The divinity of Christ is here taught, after the pride of Nicodemus has first been broken, and thus the way has been prepared for faith in the divinity of Christ, and the atonement founded upon it (vers. 14, 15).—“ And no man hath ascended up to heaven.” The meaning of these words, which have been in various ways incorrectly rendered, is indicated by the Old Testament passage, Prov. xxx. 4, “ Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended ?” Vers. 2–6 here form a commentary to the motto : “ If God be with me, I am strong.” The object is, by reference to human limitation and baseness, to invite to unconditional subjection to the revealed word of God, with which he only is justified in dispensing, who can do as God does. No man can ascend up to heaven, the abode of Omnipotence and glory ; none can raise himself to the Divine power and majesty : we are rather banished to the base and poor earth. “ And descended,” to effect those things which are afterwards enumerated : to gather the wind in His fist, to bind the waters in a garment, to establish the ends of the earth,—a descent like that in Gen. xi., equipped with the might of heaven. The question demands a negative answer, and, in meaning, the words, “ *no man hath ascended,*” of our text, correspond exactly to, “ Who hath ascended ?” in the Old Testament passage. Anton : “ The world has stood long already, and there have always been heaven-ascenders, climbing spirits, and daring minds (Gen. xi. 4, ‘ Let us build a tower, whose top may reach to heaven ;’ Isa. xiv. 13, ‘ For thou saidst in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God’) ; but has any one ever

once ascended? No one!” The questions are similar in Isa. xl. 12, “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand?” etc.,—as much as to say, no man can do so; Job xxxviii. 12, “Hast thou commanded the morning?” vers. 29, 39; and so also many other declarations of God. From this passage we perceive,—1. That the Perfect has its usual signification; so that we cannot translate, with Luther, “No man *ascendeth* to heaven,” which would also be grammatically unallowable. 2. That the ascension is to be taken in its proper sense. In the original passage, something is evidently spoken of which is absolutely impossible to man. Who ever ascended into heaven, so that he no longer needed to pray: Our Father, who art in heaven? We are led to conclude a real ascension here, not more by this original passage, than by all the parallel passages. In the whole New Testament ascending up to heaven stands only of ascension in the proper sense. Cf. vi. 62, xx. 17; Rev. xi. 12; Luke xxiv. 51. In Eph. iv. 9, 10, ἀναβαίνειν, which stands in direct opposition to καταβαίνειν here, refers to the ascension. We are led to the proper sense also by the antithesis of the descending, and by the usage of the Old Testament, in which נָבָא occurs of the returning of God to heaven, when in a passing manner He had made Himself known, in prelude to His appearance on earth in the flesh. Gen. xvii. 22, xxxv. 13; Ps. xlvi. 5, lxviii. 18. If now, after the proofs adduced, we can think only of a proper ascension, which in the case of Christ had not yet taken place, and must, moreover, render the words, even according to the original passage, as an absolute negation, admitting of no exception,—No man hitherto, or, no man ever; not, no one besides Me,—we must then supply at the close of the verse, “who will ascend to heaven.” The hypothesis of such an ellipse can be open to no objection, since the proposition, without such an hypothesis, would be contrary to the evidence, so that no ambiguity can arise from the *breviloquence*. We have then three periods: He *was* in heaven, for He came down from thence; He *is* in heaven; and He *will be* in heaven. That the declaration begins with a reference to the ascension, is on account of the original passage. Christ comprises together that which He here declares of Himself in ver. 16, in the designation of Himself as the only-begotten Son of God.—By designating Himself as He who has descended from heaven, the

Lord attributes to Himself a residence in heaven before His advent in the flesh, in harmony with what, in xvii. 5, He says of the glory which He had with the Father before the world was ; and in harmony also with John the Baptist, who in iii. 31 designates Him as having come from above, *ἀνωθεν*, and from heaven, *ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*, and as on this account absolutely exalted above all that is earthly. That the words presuppose the true divinity of Christ, so that we cannot think of such a descent as that of angels (such an one would not be compatible with His birth of Mary ; only God and man form no irreconcilable antithesis), is shown by the unmistakeable reference to the passage of the Old Testament, in which a descent is attributed to God, when He transiently appears on the earth, or there makes known His glory, in prelude to His advent in the flesh. So, *e.g.*, Ex. iii. 8, xix. 11, “The third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai.” Num. xi. 17, xii. 5 ; Isa. xxxi. 4, “So shall the LORD of hosts come down to fight for Mount Zion.” That the expression, which Jesus makes use of also in vi. 33, 38, 50, 51, 58 (cf. Eph. iv. 9, 10), refers to the superhuman nature of Christ, even the Jews recognised in vi. 42.<sup>1</sup>—Why does Christ here call Himself the Son of man ? Because His humanity was a veil, which concealed from short-sighted eyes the heavenly majesty which He claims for Himself ; as much as if He said, Notwithstanding that I stand before you as a man ; or,—Thou seest Me, indeed, as an humble man, but, etc. This expression, however, by which the Lord concedes what is before the eyes, is itself adapted to remove the offence. It refers back to Daniel—cf. on i. 32—where One *like* the Son of man, therefore like a man only on one side of His nature, appears in the clouds of heaven.—That *ὁ ὁν* *ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ* can mean only, *Who is in heaven*, not, *who was in heaven*, is now again generally acknowledged. Winer (Gram. S. 305) says, “In the sense of, who *was* in heaven, it would nearly coincide with the sense of, who came down from heaven ; but here something more special (and more emphatic) is to be declared (and the climax is not to be mistaken).” The words

<sup>1</sup> Lampe : “Indicat igitur Servator hac pharsi se licet filium hominis præter eam tamen ex Virgine secundum carnem aliam habere celestem originem, se eundem esse, qui olim descendendo in visibili symbolo in Israele præsens fuit.”

in brackets are to be struck out. There is no climax here. All three designations imply the same dignity. Each of itself leads to the conception of full divinity, which makes itself known in the past, the present, and the future of the Son of God. Not only the tautology is decisive against the interpretation, *which was*, but also the language. The participle Present, when unconnected with a Preterite or a temporal adverb, can stand only to designate the present, especially here, where the present evidently forms an antithesis to the past and the future. Heaven is here considered as the abode of God, as Aristotle says (in Tholuck, Sermon on the Mount, on Matt. vi. 9), *πάντες τὸν ἀνωτάτῳ τῷ θείῳ τόπον ἀποδιδόσι*. To be or to sit in heaven, is always represented in the Old Testament as the Divine prerogative, and as equivalent to His holiness, and His abstractedness from all creaturely essence. Thus in Ps. ii. 4, xi. 4, cxv. 3, “But our God is in the heavens; He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased.” Ps. ciii. 19, “The LORD hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all.” Eccles. v. 2, “For God is in heaven, and thou upon earth,”—He the rich, and we the poor; He the Almighty, and we the helpless. In 2 Chron. xx. 6, Jehoshaphat says, “Jehovah, God of our fathers, art Thou not God in heaven, and rulest not Thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen?” The Lord, by designating Himself here as He who as the Son of man also is in heaven, “intimates that He is conscious of the Divine glory which He enjoyed with the Father even when He walked the earth in the base form of a servant.” Coincident with our passage is xiv. 9, where Christ says, “He who seeth Me, seeth the Father.” In this duplex existence which Christ ascribes to Himself, His believing followers do to a certain degree participate. They are upon earth, and yet at the same time, through connection with their Head, in heaven.<sup>1</sup>

Vers. 14, 15. “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that

<sup>1</sup> Augustine: “Ecce hic erat et in celo erat: hic erat in carne, in celo erat divinitate, natus de matre, non recedens a Patre—Miraris quia et hic erat et in celo? Tales fecit discipulos suos. Paulum audi apostolum dicentem, nostra autem conversatio in celis. Si homo Paulus apostolus ambulabat in carne in terra et conversabatur in celo, Deus celi et terræ non poterat esse et in celo et in terra?”

whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”—The Lord here proceeds to lay before Nicodemus the “heavenly things,”—in the preceding verse, His divinity; here, the atonement to be made by Him on this foundation. Anton makes some excellent remarks on the course which Jesus takes in the conversation with Nicodemus. “Our lost condition must on our part be the *primum cognitum*, the first thing that is perceived. Of this lost condition, on account of which we must be born again, Nicodemus had heard, in ver. 6. And this had become for him *λόγος ἐμφυτός*, an implanted word. Therefore was he now become so meek, and could also attend with a gentle disposition to *τὰ ἐπουράνια*, and not only bear them, but recognise that this is the medicine by which he must be healed; and that those who would be healed, and who would not perish, but instead of this, have eternal life, must adhere to this means.—Nicodemus required to be brought in an orderly manner from one point to another, until the article of Christ could be confided to him. From this we see, that the article of Christ stands as it were before the door of all men; but man cannot advance to it *ex abrupto*, and as by a leap, but he must first be subdued and bowed down by the recognition of his depravity. But when man has entered into the knowledge of his depravity, then Christ also enters in with him, so that He confides to him the article of the Redeemer. And it is here to be admired, that though Nicodemus was at first inclined to resist the preliminaries of regeneration, he after this became still; on which account Christ confides to him the highest points, even that of His Passion.”—The fundamental question which offers itself with respect to the present declaration of Christ is this: What is signified by the brazen serpent in the original passage, Num. xxi.? In Wisd. xvi. 6, it is designated as the token of salvation, *σύμβολον σωτηρίας*. But little is said by this; the question being, in how far it was so. According to the current hypothesis, the serpent is said to be the “symbol of Divine saving power.” It is remarked, “In the Egyptian theology, it was of old a symbol of healing (saving) power.—Among the Greeks and Romans, the serpent was the constant accompaniment or representative of the god of healing, and the most appropriate symbol of the healing art.” But such heathen conceptions are not without further indication to be transferred to biblical matters. Even

if we should follow this hypothesis, it must at all events undergo a modification. The element of craft and wisdom in the serpent must be taken into view. That this characteristic element, which is rendered prominent already in Gen. iii. 1, may also be applied *in bonam partem*, is shown by Matt. x. 16. Believers being called to the imitation of God, the fact, that the wisdom of serpents is required of them, implies that God also possesses this in the highest degree,—that He is specially ingenious with respect to the means of salvation for His people. But disregarding the objection, which the hypothesis of a symbolization of Divine power must call forth, that there is none such to be found in the entire Old Testament (the cherubim even were not such, but represented the earthly living creation), this hypothesis is wrecked on the circumstance, that in Num. xxi. 8 it is said, “Make thee a Saraph, and set it on a pole.” There can be no doubt as to the meaning of Saraph. The serpent is not thus called “from the fiery red spots of its skin;” for שָׁרֵף does not mean *to burn*, but *to consume*, and it is called the consuming because its poison is like the consuming fire, as for a similar reason certain serpents are called in the Greek, πρηστῆρες and καύσωνες. The Vulgate renders שָׁרֵף correctly by *serpens flatu adurens*. Accordingly, it is the poison of the serpent which is especially to be regarded; but this is entirely left out of account, when in the serpent is perceived an emblem of the wisdom inventive of salvation, and superior to all noxious potencies. The Saraph can in a manner only obtain its rights—in correspondence with ver. 6, “And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people,”—by the hypothesis, that the brazen serpent, no less than the living ones, designates the noxious potency; the only difference being, that the brazen serpent is the noxious potency overcome by Divine power. It must be observed, that Moses does not take a living serpent, but a dead image thereof, for a sign of its conquest by the healing power of the Lord. From this point of view, the נחשת in Num. xxi. 9 (“And Moses made a serpent of brass”) is not an accidental alliteration; the fiery serpent is, as it were, hardened into dead brass. The setting up as a sign also is of significance. This was a δειγματίζειν, a θριαμβεύειν, Col. ii. 15. If the signification of the serpent in the original passage is determined, there can be no doubt also as to the point of comparison. It is manifest that remarks like

this, “the serpent does not enter into the comparison, but only its erection,” owe their origin only to confusion.<sup>1</sup> Christ is the antitype of the serpent, in so far as He has taken upon Him, and vicariously expiated, the most noxious of all noxious potencies —sin. That which was done to that lower inimical power, was a pledge that in the future an equally efficient aid should be afforded against this worst enemy; what was then done for the preservation of the earthly life, was a substantial intimation of that future working for the acquisition of eternal life. The conception, according to which Christ crucified represents conquered sin, occurs in a series of passages of the New Testament: Rom. viii. 3; 2 Cor. v. 21, *τὸν γὰρ μὴ γνόντα ἀμαρτίαν, ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν*; 1 Pet. ii. 24; and the germ of this conception is found clear and manifest even in the Old Testament, in Isa. liii. Luther says: “This is to be *lifted up*, that He bore the colour of my poison on the cross, and yet in Him there was no poison.”—In ὑψωθῆναι many commentators find a double sense: it is said to refer at the same time to the crucifixion of Christ, and to His glorification, for which the crucifixion prepared the way. But the reference to the crucifixion only is required by the preceding ὑψωσε; and in the Syriac, ՚*՚* stands in just the same manner of the crucifixion. The word ὑψοῦν always refers to the crucifixion in the discourses of Christ in John: cf. viii. 28, xii. 32, 34 (otherwise in the Acts: *τῇ δεξιᾷ τοῦ Θεοῦ ὑψωθεῖς*, ii. 33, v. 31). A double sense is not, moreover, sufficiently indicated, and the parallelism between Christ and the serpent is injured thereby.—It is said, *Even so* must the Son of man be lifted up. That the δεῖ refers chiefly to the prophecies of the Old Testament, among which is included the prophetic occurrence which the Lord here expressly adduces, is shown by comparison with the parallel passages. Cf. Matt. xvi. 21, xxvi. 54; Luke xxiv. 25, 26, 44, 46; Acts xvii. 3. Indirectly, however, δεῖ applies to the Divine counsel. For the prophecies are a

<sup>1</sup> Vitrunga, Obs. ii. c. 11, 1, p. 426, remarks on the other hand: “*Fidem in se videtur componere cum intuitu serpentis, qui Israelitis, quotquot ab ictibus et morsibus serpentum sanari cupiebant, praeceptus erat. Quæ comparatio non admodum appetat commoda esse, si ipse serpens, quem Israelitæ contueri debebant, Christum ipsum non adumbraverit.*” Vitrunga held the correct view in the main with respect to the brazen serpent; but he, and those who have followed him, have, by the introduction of the devil, obscured the elements of truth in their view.

result of this counsel, and they are here regarded only in so far as they reveal this counsel. On this alone is founded the necessity for the correspondence of the history of Christ with them.—The designation of Christ as the Son of man points to the human nature of the Redeemer, as the condition of His deepest humiliation and of His Passion ; but at the same also to the glory lying concealed behind it. Cf. Christology, v. iii. p. 89. —*Eternal* life forms the antithesis to the temporal life which was gained by looking to the brazen serpent.<sup>1</sup> This eternal life is obtained by faith, not merely in expectation, but in real possession. This is intimated by the Present *էχῃ*, in accordance with a series of intimations in other discourses of Christ in our Gospel. Cf. xvi. 36, v. 24, vi. 40, 47; 1 John v. 12, 13. Although the complete possession of eternal life belongs only to the future existence, yet the power of it reaches over to the present existence : cf. iv. 14; Heb. vi. 5. The practical result from the present declaration of Christ may be deduced in the words of Quesnel : “Ingrat, et ennemi de son propre bonheur, quiconque n'aime point à tourner les yeux pour vous pour y adorer sa vie crucifiée et y trouver la mort de ses passions.”

Ver. 16. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”—It is of significance that in the second part of this verse, the fifteenth verse is repeated letter for letter. This shows that the main emphasis rests on these words, which in the preceding verse occupy a more subordinate position, being thrown into the shade by the deep significance of the objective fact of salvation, the redemption to be made by Christ : they state the theme for the last part of the discourse of Christ to Nicodemus, which places in a clear light the vast importance of *faith*, and drives it home to the conscience of Nicodemus. In the first part of the verse, a *resumè* is given of the contents of vers. 13, 14, just as in ver. 15 the way is prepared for the section, vers. 16–21. The designation of Christ as the only-begotten Son of God, comprises what has been said in ver. 13 of the heavenly past, present, and future of Christ ; and that which is here said of the loving gift of this only-begotten Son of God, resumes what is said in ver. 14. Thus is brought

<sup>1</sup> Augustine : “Figura præstabat vitam temporalem ; res ipsa, cuius illa figura erat, præstat vitam æternam.”

to light the inner connection of vers. 13 and 14, which seem to be merely in juxtaposition. They present the interdependence of the divinity of Christ and the atonement.—Many modern commentators have supposed, after the example of Erasmus, that Christ's conversation with Nicodemus ceases at ver. 15, and that from thence onwards John continues the discourse independently. But there is no proof of this. When Olshausen remarks, "That they are no longer the words of Jesus, is evident from the fact that all reference to Nicodemus is lost," he has in point of fact only this reason for doing so, that Nicodemus, whose heart was most deeply touched in this latter part, does not again open his mouth. But this is perfectly explained by the remark made already in the Berleburger Bibel after Anton: "An anxiety to have part in God had now entered the heart of Nicodemus. Therefore he now becomes quiet, and loses himself entirely, so that we do not know what has become of him. He had been quite cast down by the former matter, his heart had been thoroughly searched; he therefore listened attentively and submissively, and perceived how necessary this only-begotten Son was for him. And though he might have made objections to this most of all, if he had wished to follow his depraved reason, yet now there was no contradiction in his mouth, because he perceived the truth and necessity of the thing. The fear of being lost had been fully developed in him. For Christ meets him now with loving and sweet words, though before He had spoken sharply to him; not as though the disposition of Christ induced this, but the disposition of Nicodemus required such an order, because he needed first to be subdued and humbled." But it is opposed to the supposition, that from ver. 16 onwards John speaks in his own person, not only that no single certain, or even probable, instance can be adduced of such a continuation of a discourse of Christ (the γάρ, which expressly connects the preceding words, must be regarded here),<sup>1</sup> and that the credibility of the Gospel is seriously injured by it; but, still more, that the discourse of Christ has thus an incomplete character. It had commenced with an earnest appeal to the conscience, and we expect it to conclude in the same

<sup>1</sup> "Quin contra—remarks Knapp in his *Opuscula*—hujus scriptoris perpetuo in more illud est positum, ut vel interloquens aliorum sermoni, vel ante expositio quædam subnectens, claris id indiciis ostendat."

manner. The objective facts, the divinity of Christ and His atonement, are still in suspense, if they are not in the conclusion of the discourse stamped, as it were, into the mind. Faith generally, and especially in the discourses of Christ in John, occupies so important a position, that its significance is not satisfied by the brief intimation in ver. 15.—*Kόσμος* is properly the universe, the creation. Its limitation here to the human race, which, according to Gen. i., forms the centre of the creation, is required even from the nature of the case. The limitation to the *mundus electorum* in the decisions of the Synod of Dort, and in the Swiss *Formula Consensus*, is opposed not only by the parallel passages, 1 Tim. ii. 4, 2 Pet. iii. 9, where “all men,” and “all” without exception, correspond to the *world* here, but it is also absolutely irreconcilable with our text. Even the word itself is decisive against it; and further, as Heumann remarks, “It was not perceived that the Lord divided the world of which He speaks into two classes of men, namely, into such as on account of their unbelief would be lost, and those who would be saved by their faith; and teaches, that God has loved them both, and desires as much that one part of mankind should believe and be saved, as the other.” But the words are to call attention not merely to the greatness of the love of God, but at the same time also to the depth of our misery. This point of view is rendered prominent by Luther when he says, “By this He wishes to show the world the misery and need in which it is involved; namely, that its condition is such that it is altogether lost, and must remain eternally lost where Christ does not interpose with this sermon.—Here is required another word and sermon than that which they had hitherto heard and learned from the law, and another power than that of men.”—“That He gave His only-begotten Son.” Luther: “His Son, who is as great as Himself, this is an eternally incomprehensible gift.” The assertion, that “μονογενής must have been put into the mouth of Jesus from the language of John,” is to be reversed. John, who alone uses this word (cf. what is said of it at i. 14) of Christ, and alone also records that Christ used it of Himself, derived it without doubt from this discourse. It has an Old Testament basis, besides that in Zech xii. 10 (cf. on i. 14), in substance also in Gen. xxii. 2, where God says to Abraham, “Take thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest.” Coincident

with this transfer of *only-begotten* from this passage, is the reference of ἡγάπησεν to the words, *whom thou lovest*. The typical significance of the occurrence is expressly taught, in harmony with the declaration of our text, in Heb. xi. 19 : ὅθεν αὐτὸν (τὸν μονογενῆ, ver. 17) καὶ ἐν παραβολῇ ἐκομίσατο, in a figure, i.e., as prefiguring Christ. So also the typical reference of the occurrence—which has its truth in this, that God does not require without giving; that when He requires the dearest, there is in this a pledge that He also will give His dearest,—lies at the foundation of Rom. viii. 32, where the Apostle verbally alludes to Gen. xxii. 16 : “Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son.”—That ἔδωκε does not refer merely to the incarnation, but principally to the atonement, is evident from the reference to ver. 14, and also from the reference to the type, where the words, “hast not withheld,” correspond to “gave” here. In Rom. viii. 32, παρέδωκεν αὐτόν corresponds to ἔδωκε, without being on this account exactly equivalent in meaning. The completion of the gift of God was the resignation even to death.—How is *faith* here related to *regeneration* in ver. 5 ? It is not identical with it, but its condition. Faith takes hold of the atoning death of the only-begotten Son of God. On this follow, in the case of those who are in circumstances like Nicodemus (how it is with children is another question), the forgiveness of sins and impartation of the Holy Spirit, which are embodied in baptism. Cf. Acts viii. 12, ὅτε δὲ ἐπιστευσαν—ἐβαπτίζοντο; ver. 13, xviii. 8; Mark xvi. 16 ; Eph. iv. 5. Acts x. 47, where the Holy Spirit is imparted before baptism, forms an exception, the reasons of which are obvious.

Ver. 17. “For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.”—The triple mention of the *world* here, is no more accidental than the triple mention of *believing* in ver. 18. The object is not to oppose the Jewish opinion, which regarded Christ by way of preference as the Judge of the Gentile world; for everything in this discourse has a personal reference, and is intended to win the heart of Nicodemus. So also here, the words are to turn the heart of Nicodemus to Christ; so that he may resign himself to Him who has come from heaven for the salvation of the world, and for his salvation. It is to make him feel that here there is no new law presented before him, but

a gospel, a free message. “O wondrous grace and goodness! O deepest love and kindness!” etc. It is not denied that the judgment is a consequence, but that it is the object of the mission of Christ. It cannot be the object; for if God had purposed only to judge, He could have done it without giving up His Son, and the latter would not have appeared in the form of a servant. Luther: “For such a judgment and sentence has been already passed by the law on all men, because they are all born in sin; so that they are already adjudged to death, and to the executioner with the cord, and nothing now is wanting but that the sword be drawn.” But on this very account, because God sent His Son to be a Saviour, the judgment must be passed on those who despise so great a benefit, and thus fill up the measure of their sin. Cf. vers. 18, 19, ix. 39. Quesnel: “The first advent of the Son of God is the advent of salvation. Unhappy he who renders it in vain, and even changes it into a judgment by his unbelief.”—The passages in which Christ appears as the *sent* of God, occur in number only in the discourses of Christ and of John. As Christ’s designation of Himself as the Son of man always refers to Daniel, so does this expression invariably contain an allusion to the personal identity of Christ with the Old Testament Angel, or *sent* of the Lord. Cf. Christology 3, 2, S. 62, 63.<sup>1</sup> The Old Testament basis for the words, ἵνα σωθῆται κόσμος δι’ αὐτοῦ, is formed by Isa. lii. 10, “And all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.”

Ver. 18. “He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.”—As Nicodemus has been allured to belief in what precedes, he is now pointed to the mournful consequences of unbelief, in order that he may be filled with horror of such a grievous sin.—“He is condemned already,” in the very act of unbelief, which excludes him from the only source of life and salvation, and causes the

<sup>1</sup> [Transl. pub. by T. and T. Clark, iv. pp. 311, 312.]—Lampe: “Missus jam ab antiquo ad patres erat in typo et præludio. Unde hæc phrasis includebat Jesum esse eundem, qui tam illustre Legati illius, in quo erat nomen Jehovæ, munus jam a priscis temporibus obtinuerat sed qui jam propius aderat, ad implenda illa omnia, quæ tot et tam splendidis missionibus præcedentibus adumbrata erant.—Ad legationes majoris momenti non insuetum fuit Principibus, ut propios filios adhiberent.”

wrath of God to abide upon him, iii. 36. This, of course, does not exclude the entrance of an external manifestation of the judgment at a determined epoch, Matt. xxv. 31 sq.; nor that the judgment in this and the future world brings with it different stages of punishment, Rev. xx. 15. Anton: "Here the man murmurs, and says: I thought, indeed, there would again be a judgment and condemnation. But to show that it is not necessary, and how wrong he is in this, Christ here adds an ὅτι—because he does not believe, not because he is a sinner, but because he will remain a sinner and will not believe.—God has laboured to bring him to πιστεύειν, to faith; but because he will remain in unbelief, he is condemned.—This, then, is the chief sin, that man does not believe. On this account he is lost; not because he has sinned as other men, but because he keeps his sins, and will not by faith renounce them." With respect to faith in the *Name*, cf. on i. 12.

Ver. 19. "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."—Quesnel: "Nothing discovers more the corruption of an age, and gives more reason to fear the wrath of God, than when we see opposition to the light increase in the same proportion in which God bountifully diffuses it."—*Love to our darkness is always concealed behind a false love of the light; and it is the great punishment of God on nations and individuals to give them over to this depraved sense, which takes light for darkness and darkness for light.* "This is the condemnation;" it is the sin, and at the same time the condemnation, or the punishment. For that which is sin from one side, is from the other the punitive act of God, by which He adjudges to darkness those who love the darkness, and excludes from the light those who despise the light. They do not disappoint God, but rather, by their sins against them, fulfil the eternal laws of His being.—On light and darkness, cf. i. 4, 5. The light is salvation, as it has come into the world in the person of the Saviour; the darkness is the wickedness of sin, and the evil inseparable from it.—*Men* are represented principally by the Jews. *Ὑγάπησεν* refers to the experience which Jesus had already had, especially in Jerusalem. But the Aorist requires only, that the action be one that is already commenced. It is used not infrequently of general truths founded on empirical observa-

tions : Buttmann, Gram. S. 174, 5.—Lücke remarks, “It is said, Men loved darkness *more* than light. To love it absolutely would be devilish. So, according to John, there is in every one a spark, a feeling of need for the light.” But this remark is certainly not in the meaning of the Saviour. Of course a *ratherness* only is declared, but in the background there is a complete want of love to the light, and hatred towards it. The word *μᾶλλον* stands likewise in xii. 43, “They loved the praise of men *more* than the praise of God ;” and it is evident, that they did not love the praise of God at all. When, in Gen. xxix. 30, it is said that Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah, the very next verse, “And when the LORD saw that Leah was *hated*,” shows how this is to be understood : cf. Deut. xxi. 15. Who, from Luke xviii. 14, *κατέβη οὗτος δεδικαιωμένος εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ ἡ γὰρ ἐκεῖνος*, would conclude, that the Pharisee likewise shared in the justification, but in a less degree ? or from 2 Tim. iii. 4, *φιλήδονοι μᾶλλον ἢ φιλόθεοι*, that love to God is ascribed to these persons, but only in a less degree ?—The reason for despising the light is stated in the words, “because their deeds were evil.” In a certain sense, the deeds of all men are evil—so certain as the imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth, and as all men are evil, *πονηροί*, according to the declaration of the Saviour, Matt. vii. 11. But the words cannot be intended to have this sense here : they can refer only to decided and stiff-necked wickedness. The Scripture, immediately after it has recorded the depth of the fall of sin, in which the whole human race is involved, teaches, that notwithstanding this, there is still always an opposition between the unrighteous and the righteous—those who surrender themselves unconditionally to their innate sin, like Cain and his descendants, and those who, in adherence to God, and by walking with Him, contend against it, as Abel, Enoch, Gen. v. 22, 24, the sons of God in Gen. vi. 2, and Noah, of whom it is said in Gen. vi. 9, “Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations : Noah walked with God.” In the same sense in which *evil deeds* stand here, occurs the phrase, *evil works*, in 1 John iii. 12, where the evil works of Cain are opposed to the righteous works of Abel. This difference was especially perceptible among the covenant-people, whom the Saviour has principally in view here. In the heathen world it was less prominent. Although such differences occurred even here, yet

in the great whole they were altogether buried ἐν τοῖς ἔπυοις τοῖς πονηροῖς, Col. i. 21.

Ver. 20. “For every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.”—He that doeth evil is, according to Knapp, *qui peccatis indulget, qui vitiis dat operam*; or, as the Berleb. Bibel says, “whose practice it is to defend the old idle ways, and who will not leave that which is not worthy that a rational being should depend upon it.” *Light* here is not used exclusively of the personal light, Christ, but of all which is adapted to ameliorate the godless condition of the natural man, *viz.*, of God and His revelation, the Church and its ministry. That the works should appear in their true character, is intolerable to him who is resolved to walk in the ways of sin. Inseparable from sin are hypocrisy and deceit, which call the evil good, and the good evil; so that darkness is changed into light, and light into darkness, the bitter into sweet, and the sweet into bitter, Isa. v. 20. Such perversions of the truth are the stronghold of sin. A man cannot maintain himself therein, when it presents itself in its true form; and on this account he carefully avoids more immediate contact with the truth from above, and its bearers. On this account he *hates* the truth, when it seeks to gain access to him: he knows that sin cannot consist with it, and that his condition must be an intolerable one, if by contact with the light his sin is brought to light, Eph. v. 13. Anton: “A man not desiring the *elenchum* becomes an enemy of the light, *μισεῖ τὸ φῶς*. This intimates that the light presses him hard, though it does not properly compel him. The light attacks the man, and the man attacks the light in return, and extinguishes it, becomes an enemy of light, an enemy of detection, an enemy of the *elenchus*; though at first he does not indeed think that he is an enemy. But when the time comes to proceed *ad rem*, then the enmity is revealed.” This is the great secret of the enmity of the world to the living God and His all-revealing word,—to Christ also, and His Church. Man can bear anything rather than the revelation of his true character, the consequence of which is, that he must hate and despise himself, when he has once resolved not to renounce his lusts and passions.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Calvin: “Non alia de causa repellunt Christi doctrinam, nisi quia latet  
bras suas amant, quibus tegatur eorum fidelitas.”

Ver. 21. “But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.”—To do truth is to do that which flows from the principle of truth,—*q. d.*, to act in truth, Judges ix. 16, 19. Truth forms the antithesis to falsehood, pretence, and hypocrisy, with which wickedness is associated. To act rightly and to do truth are coincident: cf. Neh. ix. 33, “Thou hast done right (truth), but we have done wickedly.” Here righteousness is designated as truthfulness in antithesis to ver. 20, according to which the wicked shun the light, in order that the true character of their works, which are covered over with falsehood and hypocrisy, may not be brought to light. For one to do truth, is above all things to acknowledge and confess his sin. In Ps. xxxii. 2, he is declared blessed, in whose spirit, in this respect, there is no guile. Cf. the remarks on i. 48. But we must not, with Augustine, stop here. The expression designates, generally, true moral earnestness,—a living *in God*, or in communion with Him; so that He is the efficient principle of all actions. The works being done in God presupposes that God is *known*. The Lord speaks to a member of the covenant-people, among whom God is present with His Spirit. In a member of this people, who is full of upright moral earnestness, there may be much weakness and much error; but the fundamental tendency of his heart is towards God, and therefore he may approach with humble confidence to the light, which, in the appearance of Christ, shone with previously unknown brightness, being conscious that he will not be put to shame by it, but will receive from it a good testimony. What is here said applies to the heathen only in so far as they had entered into connection with Israel,—an instance of which we have in Cornelius, Acts x. 2, 4, 35,—or, as by more immediate contact with the Church of Christ, they had been awakened and rendered capable of doing the truth. The *φαῦλα πράσσων* and the *ποιῶν τὴν ἀληθείαν* are, moreover, not in mere juxtaposition. There is in men often, indeed usually, the strangest duplicity. They feel themselves, on the one hand, repelled, in so far as sin is mighty within them; and, on the other, attracted, in so far as a more noble moral aspiration stirs within them. So must it have been also with Nicodemus. He was in a state of indecision. He was to make the great choice between the two opposing principles, which con-

tended within him. Jesus would hardly have laid vers. 19 and 20 before him if they had not concerned him; for here it is no *locus* of dogmatics which is treated of, but everything has a personal reference. If ver. 21 only applied to him, why did he come to Jesus by night? What is afterwards related of Nicodemus shows, that, with regard to the choice here left to him, he decided to come to the light, and now for ever took leave of that evil principle, which cried to him, The further from the light the better.

The Section chap. iii. 22–36 serves to show the general object of the Gospel, to prove that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and to lead to faith in Him, and thus to the possession of life in His name, xx. 31. It communicates the glorious testimony which the Baptist gave at the close of his course, to the disadvantage of his own honour, and in opposition to his disciples, who thought themselves bound to maintain this honour. This testimony had a special significance, a *preium affectionis* for John, who had separated from his former master in order to become a follower of Jesus; and such a testimony impressed the last seal on his proceeding.

Ver. 22. “After these things came Jesus and His disciples into the land of Judea; and there He tarried with them, and baptized.”—Since Jesus came from Jerusalem, by the land of Judea can be meant only the rest of the land excluding the capital. The limitation, however, is not implied in the expression itself, as though *γῆ* might denote the country in distinction from the city, as *χώρα*, in xi. 55, Mark i. 5; but it is given only in the connection by which Jerusalem is excluded. The mere word *Iουδαίαν* might have been used equally as well. Cf. the opposition of Jerusalem and Judah in Ezra ii. 1, vii. 14; 2 Chron. xx. 18. Similar is the opposition of Judah and (the rest of) Israel. As in this case, Israel does not in itself designate the ten tribes, but only in their opposition to Judah, so also the “land of Judea” is in itself the whole of Judea, and the limitation is given only by the preceding mention of the stay in Jerusalem,—Jesus was sent to all the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and must therefore proclaim the Gospel of the kingdom in all parts of the land. At the very commencement of His ministry He made a sort of circuit through it. He commenced

His activity in Bethabara beyond Jordan; then He turned to Galilee; then to Jerusalem, where His stay was not long, because there the most dangerous elements were in opposition, which were not to be stirred up before the time; and then to the land of Judea, excepting the capital. The expression leads us to conclude that He made more than a transient stay there. Cf. xi. 54. According to the apparently chance notice in iv. 35, He continued there a number of months—not less than seven or eight. And this we should expect from the fact, that Judea was the chief part of the whole. If Jesus had immediately withdrawn to a corner of Galilee, this would have given rise to suspicions against His ministry. Chap. iv. 45 shows, that even the successes in Galilee were conditioned by the preceding appearance in Judea. It is remarkable that John communicates so little from this long period,—nothing but the testimony of the Baptist, which for him had a special interest. This is explained only by the fact, that he presupposes the first Gospels, and particularly that of his fellow-Apostle, Matthew. That which took place in the land of Judea had essentially the same character as that of which the others had given an account as taking place in Galilee. Even the summary manner in which the Evangelist refers to Christ's doings in Jerusalem, —*θεωροῦντες αὐτοῦ τὰ σημεῖα ἀ ἐποίει*, ii. 23, cf. iv. 45,—requires to be supplemented from the first Gospels, and refers back to them. In this brevity of John is contained at the same time a justification of the total silence concerning Christ's doings in Judea, in Matthew and the two disciples of the Apostles who followed him. On account of the similarity of the facts, Matthew could attain his object—to prove that Jesus is the Christ—by beginning his account only when Jesus had made Galilee the theatre of His continued activity. To this he was invited still more by the interest which, as a Galilean, he felt in Galilee, and the circumstance, that he was not, like John, an eyewitness of the earlier ministry, and that this very ministry of the Saviour in Galilee was rendered prominent in the prophecies of the Old Testament, the fulfilment of which it was his task to demonstrate. Matthew places the passage of Isaiah expressly at the head of his account in chap. iv. 14–16, and thus himself declares his purpose. The two apostolic disciples, who did not share his purpose, did not feel themselves

called upon to open a new path, which was therefore left to the second Apostle among the Evangelists. Between the baptism and the commencement of the continued Galilean ministry of Jesus (he passes by the transient stay there, mentioned by John), Matthew records only a single fact—the temptation, which, on account of its high significance, and especially its Old Testament reference, could not be passed by. That this fact falls during the time of the stay in the land of Judea, we have already seen, and it will be brought out more distinctly in the remarks on ver. 23. John distinctly designates the point of incidence of his Gospel on that of Matthew. John iv. 1-3 refers back to Matt. iv. 12.—This passage and iv. 2 are the only places in the Gospels which mention the *baptizing* of Jesus and His disciples; from which this at least is evident, that during the earthly life of Jesus, baptism still occupied only a subordinate position. It is possible even, that it was afterwards entirely given up, or occurred only sporadically. It had more of a prophetic than a certifying significance, as Jesus, during His life on earth, loved to prefigure, in general, that which would take place in the future developments of the kingdom of God, as may be seen in the instance of awakenings from the dead. The institution of the second sacrament, the Lord's Supper, had also a symbolic, prophetic significance; so that the essence of the sacrament did not, in it, immediately come to life. The *being born of water and Spirit*, iii. 5, could then take place only very imperfectly. That the Holy Spirit, in His property as the regenerating principle, did not till after the glorification of Christ attain His true nature and full energy, so that He did not previously, as it were, exist, is expressly stated in John vii. 39. And as yet also, there was not the true water. According to xix. 34, it flowed first with the blood from the wound in Jesus' side. The spiritual water of the forgiveness of sins, which is bestowed in, with, and under the water of baptism, rests on the fact of the atonement accomplished by Christ. According to 1 John v. 6, Jesus came with water and blood; not with water only, but with water and blood, and the blood is the ground of the water. But, although the baptism which Jesus then allowed to be imparted had not yet the full significance of the later baptism, since the institution of the proper and true baptism was not made by Christ until after

His resurrection, Matt. xxviii. 19, yet there is no ground for concluding, that those who were baptized during the earthly life of Jesus were afterwards baptized over again; but we must rather suppose that the baptism of water which had already taken place received its spiritual supplement afterwards, and that it had the significance of a pledge of the sprinkling with the true water, and of the impartation of the Holy Ghost therewith connected. The repetition was the less allowable, since the germ-like commencements of the impartation of forgiveness and of the Spirit were already, during the earthly life of Christ, connected with the baptism imparted.—If the signification of this baptism of Christ is correctly apprehended, the question is at once answered, why John did not immediately cease to baptize, after Jesus had been baptized by him, or at least after Jesus had commenced to baptize with His disciples. The baptism of John was not essentially different from the baptism of the disciples of Christ. The latter also partook of its essentially prophetic character. When John designates himself as him who baptizes with water, and Christ as Him who baptizes with the Holy Ghost, i. 33, cf. Matt. iii. 11, he has not in view the baptism which Jesus then already allowed to be performed, but rather the baptism which was to be established by Him after He had proved Himself to be the Lamb of God, which taketh upon Him the sins of the world. Even the juxtaposition of the spiritual baptism of Jesus and the fiery baptism of the judgment, Matt. iii. 11 (ver. 12 forms the commentary to *καὶ πνυρί*, by which the reference to the judgment is clearly corroborated—the *πνυρὶ* is resumed in *πνυρὶ ἀσβέστῳ*), and Luke iii. 16, indicate that we are not to think of the baptism which was performed by Jesus during His appearance in the form of a servant. The Saviour, in Acts i. 5, says to the disciples before His ascension, ὅτι Ἰωάννης μὲν ἐβάπτισεν ὑδατι, ὑμεῖς δὲ βαπτισθήσεσθε ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ, οὐ μετὰ πολλὰς ταύτας ἡμέρας. According to this, the specifically Christian baptism, the baptism of the Spirit, was then still in the future. Up to this time there was only a baptism of water; and this being mentioned in connection with John, implies that the baptism which the Apostles had hitherto performed, had essentially the same character as that of John. An appeal might be made in favour of the contrary view to the fact of the second baptism of the

disciples of John, in Acts xix. 1 sq.; while, on the other hand, it has been remarked, that those who were baptized by the Apostles before the atoning death of Christ were not subjected to a second baptism. But the case mentioned is only an exceptional one, and concerns those who had received the baptism of John without recognising its deeper significance: cf. Bengel *in loc.* Apollos was not baptized again, nor were the Apostles.—With the question, Why did John continue to baptize?—which is the less justified, since John had not himself to determine the limits of his ministry, but to wait quietly until they were fixed by God—is connected another, “Why did he not himself enter the circle of Jesus’ disciples, instead of remaining without, so that Jesus could say, in Matt. xi. 11, that the least in the kingdom of heaven was greater than he?” This question is grounded on false assumptions. John did become a disciple of Jesus, as is plainly evinced by ver. 29. Matt. xi. 11 does not declare the contrary. It is not the least who are there spoken of, but the relatively less; and the reason why John occupies only a low position within the kingdom of God is not, that he did not follow Christ, but that the redemption was not made till after his departure, and that the possession of the highest gifts was conditioned by the atoning death of Christ. Cf. John vii. 39; Acts i. 4, 5, 8.—The declaration here, that Jesus baptized, is more exactly defined by John iv. 2; according to which, Christ did not baptize personally, but only through the medium of His disciples. The question, why Jesus did not Himself baptize, has been variously answered. The Berleburger Bibel says, “Christ would not have been ashamed to do it Himself, but He did not, because the people would have made comparisons and boastings out of it: Such an one baptized me with his own hand! as at Corinth such factions arose in this way, that even Paul was glad that he had not baptized many.” If the baptism at this time had essentially a typical significance, it was the more appropriate that it should be performed by the same ministry commissioned by Christ which was afterwards to administer the baptism typified. It is, however, of importance to note, that the baptism administered by the Apostles is traced immediately to Christ. “It is of great service,” says Quesnel, “to present this truth to the mind at the distribution and reception of the sacraments, in order that

the faith and reverence may be brought to them which are due."

Ver. 23. "And John also was baptizing in *Ænon*, near to Salim, because there was much water there; and they came, and were baptized."—The position of *Ænon* and Salim is a matter of controversy. The following facts furnish a test of the different hypotheses. 1. *Ænon* is to be looked for on the hither side of the Jordan. This is evident from ver. 26. 2. *Ænon* was in Judea. For Jesus was staying in Judea, and the whole narrative shows that John was baptizing near to Him. His disciples have to do with a Jew in ver. 25. 3. *Ænon* must have been situated in a *district* where water was scarce; for only if this were the case would the abundance of water at *Ænon* have furnished a reason for John's choosing this place. The words, *ὅτι ὑδατα πολλὰ ἦν ἐκεῖ*, would be incomprehensible in the neighbourhood of the Jordan or the Sea of Gennesaret. There, ten other places might have been chosen just as well. If we take these tokens into view, we shall immediately give up the current hypothesis (Von Raumer, *Palästina*, S. 159), according to which *Ænon* was situated 8 *mil. passuum* southwards from Scythopolis, in the plain of the Jordan. The authority of the *Onomasticon* does not by any means suffice to support such a confusing and impossible supposition. According to this, *Ænon* was situated in Samaria, where the Baptist had nothing to do, and in the vicinity of the Jordan, where the abundance of water would lose all its significance.—The key to the explanation of our text is furnished by *Josh. xv. 32*. The section, vers. 21–32, enumerates the cities in the southern portion of Judea. It is said in ver. 21, "And the uttermost cities of the tribe of the children of Judah, toward the coast of Edom southward." The conclusion of the list of these cities is formed by Shilhim, and Ain, and Rimmon, in ver. 32. That these cities were situated at the end of the southern district, on the borders of the desert, is shown, in harmony with their names, by *Zech. xiv. 10*: "All the land shall be turned as a plain, from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem." That Geba was on the northern boundary of Judea, is evident from the circumstance, that in *2 Kings xxiii. 8*, the whole extent of the kingdom of Judah is designated by the expression, "from Geba to Beersheba." Rimmon in Zechariah corresponds to Beersheba here,

as the most southern point. And in this region Rimmon may still be discovered. Von Raumer remarks in his 4th Edition, under the word Rimmon :—“According to Velde, Mem. S. 344, now Um er Rummamim, between Eleutheropolis and Beersheba. There are springs in the vicinity.” The LXX., according to the Codex Alex., render the three names by Σελεῖμ καὶ Ἀὶν καὶ Ρεμμών (cum καὶ Ἀὶν charact. minore; Holmes). The two latter must have been closely connected from the beginning, and have afterwards become one place, to which the manner of writing in the Cod. Alex. probably refers. Even in Josh. xix. 7, cf. 1 Chron. iv. 32, the copula is wanting, by which they are separated from each other in xv. 32, Ain=Rimmon; in Neh. xi. 29, the blending has become complete, for here we have En-Rimmon. It seems that our Ἀηνον represents a further progress, and that this name is contracted from En-Rimmon. Cf. on such “purely accidental and gradual abbreviations of proper names,” Ewald, § 275, S. 591. Ἀὶνών affords the last stage. If we thus refer to Josh. xv. 32, the words, “because there was much water there,” have suddenly a great light thrown on them. The southern district was an arid country. Of what importance springs were there, is shown by Josh. xv. 19. This is evident also from the circumstance, that the places are named from the water. This applies not merely to Ain, but also to שְׁלָחִים. The name is manifestly connected with Siloa, שְׁלָחָה, emissio aquæ, fons v. aquæductus, John ix. 7. In aridity, remarks Ritter, *Erdkunde* 16, 1, 23, 28, the southern district forms the continuation of the Arabian Desert.—How came the Baptist into this region? The general answer might be given, that his task was to go through the whole country, for he was the preacher of repentance to the whole people. But there is an intimation in Matt. iv. 12 which will not allow us to be content with this general answer. According to this passage, the Baptist was delivered up, παρεδόθη—he was betrayed to his peculiar enemy, which in the Scriptures Herod everywhere appears to have been—by others. That the Pharisees were the betrayers, we learn from John iv. 1. According to this, John was at the time of his capture in another territory than that of Herod. His being there delivered up, presupposes that he had already previously done something by which he had drawn upon him the enmity of Herod. We learn what this was

from Matt. xiv. 4. John must have had time to follow the example of his predecessor Elijah, of whom we read in 1 Kings xix. 3, “And when he saw that, he arose and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which is in Judah.” Like his predecessor, he retired to the borders of the Arabian Desert, probably in order under certain circumstances to penetrate, like him, into the desert itself. That he did not again return to the theatre of his former ministry, is clear, not only from the *παρεδόθη* of Matthew, but also from John x. 40, according to which John did not baptize at Bethabara after his stay at *Ænon*, but only before it. We also expect from the declaration of the Baptist here in ver. 30, and from the words, *πάντες ἔρχονται πρὸς αὐτόν*, of his own disciples in ver. 26, that he will soon retire from public life. Everything here gives the impression, that we are on the eve of an impending catastrophe.—The Baptist had probably come first into this region; and his presence occasioned Jesus to go there, in order to be near to John, to give him an opportunity of hearing the voice of the Bridegroom, ver. 29, and an occasion for his last testimony concerning Him.—If the situation of *Ænon* is correctly determined,<sup>1</sup> light is thus cast at the same time on the scene of the temptation of Christ, which, as we have already proved, must fall into the period designated in ver. 22. The southern district borders on the great Arabian Desert,—Von Raumer says, S. 176, under Beersheba, “Here, according to Robinson, the southern desert ends, and Palestine begins,”—in which the children of Israel were tempted, and Elijah, according to 1 Kings xix., of which we are always first to think, where “the wilderness” is spoken of, and to which especially the words, *ὑν μετὰ τῶν θηρίων*, of Mark refer, particularly when compared with Deut. viii. 15 and Isa. xxx. 6.

Ver. 24. “For John was not yet cast into prison.”—This remark presupposes that there was occasion for thinking otherwise, though there is none such in our Gospel. And regarding this fact merely, the remark is a very striking one. If John, according to ver. 23, was baptizing at *Ænon*, it was a matter of course that he was not yet cast into prison. The solution of the riddle is given in Matt. iv. 12. From this it might appear that

<sup>1</sup> In this determination the author has independently coincided with Wieseler in his chronological Synopsis, S. 247 sq., which, however, he did not perceive until after the above had been written.

the commencement of the ministry of Jesus was conditioned by the delivering up of John. Matthew had omitted the earlier ministry of Jesus. John hints at this, by remarking, after the account of a contemporaneous ministry of Jesus and of John, that John was not yet cast into prison. By this is meant, that the events recorded in vers. 22-36 are to be placed *before* Matt. iv. 12. It is of significance that John does not afterwards record the imprisonment of John, which shows also the connection of his Gospel with that of Matthew. John iv. 1-3 are supplemented by Matt. iv. 12, and are clear only when this connection is recognised.—A “correction of the synoptic tradition” is not to be mentioned. The words, *ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν*, in Matt. iv. 12, in complete harmony with John, intimate an earlier ministry; for only in this case could Jesus have been obliged to *return* to Galilee, ii. 14, when, in consequence of His ministry, enmity and danger had arisen in Judea, which He wished to avoid. John iv. 1, 2, gives only the commentary and completion to the *ἀνεχώρησε*. The words, *ἀπὸ τότε ἥρξατο*, in Matt. iv. 17, refer to the commencement of the ministry on the new theatre—the Galilean activity, which, according to John also, did not begin till that time; for the few days which Jesus had previously spent in Galilee after His baptism, do not come into consideration. There is no trace of any public preaching or *κηρύσσειν* during that transient residence in Galilee. In Judea, Jesus certainly developed such an activity, John ii. 13 to the end of ch. iii.; but Matthew contents himself with intimating that he is aware of it. He had not yet at that time become an associate of Jesus; and the Galilean activity of Jesus had for him, on account of the prophecy of Isaiah at the head of it, an especial interest.

Ver. 25. “Then there arose a question on the part of John’s disciples with a Jew about purifying.”—The *οὗν* indicates that the discussion was occasioned by the nearness of the two baptisms. It is of significance that the discussion was started by the disciples of John. They evidently call a Jew (*Iουδαῖον* is the best authenticated reading, not *Iουδαῖων*) to account, who gave the baptism of Christ the preference over that of their master, and was either coming from or going to it. Cf. ver. 26, where the sentence, *ἴδε οὗτος βαπτίζει, καὶ πάντες ἔρχονται πρὸς αὐτὸν*, is the general statement which has just been proved by

this particular case. “On account of purification” (ii 6): whether it were to be sought in the baptism of Christ, ver. 22, or in the baptism of John, ver. 23.

Ver. 26. “And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all come to Him.”—It is difficult for them to yield up the honour of their master, and with it their own. Yet their opposition is not an absolutely fixed one; for they lay it before their *Master* that it may be removed, and seek help from him against their old man. If he is quite sure of his point they will submit; and it could scarcely have been a matter of doubt to them how he would declare himself; for they could not conceal from themselves that he had previously borne testimony to Jesus. The words, “and all come to Him,” are less in contradiction to those in ver. 32, “and no man receiveth His testimony,” than it might seem. *Πάντες*, as limited by the case itself, are all those in general who wished to be baptized, but who, when compared with the great mass of the indifferent and hostile, formed only a vanishing minority.

Ver. 27. “John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.”—It is disputed whether this proposition refers merely to Christ or to John, or to both at the same time. But we must be content with John; for it can scarcely be doubted that *ἄνθρωπος* here is emphatic, containing in itself the ground of the axiom, and corresponding to *ἐκ τῆς γῆς* in ver. 31, to which it stands in all the closer relation, because the “man of the earth” occurs in the original passage, Ps. x. 18. The use of *ἄνθρωπος*, and the reference contained in it to his inferiority of position, who must be content with whatever lot is assigned to him, is explained also by Eccles. vi. 10: “That which he is, he hath long been named, and it is known that he is *man*: neither may he contend with Him that is mightier than he.” And the words, “given from heaven,” apply more appropriately to John than to Jesus, who, according to the following verses, comes from above, is God’s Son and representative on earth, and possesses what He has, not as a free gift, but as the emanation of His whole personality. We must therefore suppose, that in ver. 28 we have the application of the general proposition, as if it were said, “Because I

am a mere man, I cannot be," etc. It is not to be objected, that the jealous question of his disciples had quite prepared the Baptist to give an apology for Jesus; for the words of the disciples were indirectly a requisition on the Baptist to maintain his dignity against Jesus, and to fix the limits of his independent sphere towards that of Christ. *Δύναται* is not the mere moral possibility, but *λαμβάνειν*; corresponding to the being given, designates a real receiving. A man may make many pretensions, but in fact he receives only that which is given him from above; and to strive after more than this, is a criminal and destructive undertaking.

Ver. 28. "Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him."—As in i. 6, 33, so also here, an allusion is made to Mal. iii. 1; cf. Matt. xi. 10. That which in the original passage is said of the LORD, the Baptist refers to Christ, in harmony with the prophecy itself, in which He who is first called Adonai, is afterwards called the Angel of the covenant. "Behold, I send My messenger, and he prepares the way *before Me*: and the LORD, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple; and the Covenant-Angel, whom ye desire, behold, He comes, saith Jehovah Sabaoth." According to this, God the Lord will appear in the person of His heavenly messenger; which was fulfilled in the advent of Christ, in whom the Angel of the Lord, the *λόγος*, became flesh. With respect to *ἐκείνου*, the remark of Buttmann applies, on the use of the pronoun *ἐκεῖνος* in the Fourth Gospel (*Studien und Kritiken*, 1860, S. 510): "But it is not always the case, that the two demonstrative pronouns are united in such an antithesis in one sentence; but it does occur, that *ἐκεῖνος* stands alone. Then it is necessary that some other conception, whether it be a pronoun, or the subject contained in the verb, or the speaker himself, take as it were the place of the *οὗτος*, from which the *ἐκεῖνος* only distinguishes the other." Thus *οὗτος* is here concealed under *ἐγώ*.

Ver. 29. "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. This my joy therefore is fulfilled."—The words, *ο ἐστηκὼς καὶ ἀκούων αὐτοῦ*, refute the current representation, that John avoided a closer relation to Christ; and show that, as would be a

matter of course after his declaration, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh upon Him the sin of the world,” he eagerly received the intelligence of Christ’s words and deeds. It certainly seems, that in order to preserve his isolated position as forerunner, he did not enter into any closer *personal* intercourse with Jesus. But he maintained communion with Him by the medium of other persons,—of whom we must suppose the Apostle John before all to have been one, who had been pointed to Christ by the Baptist himself, and of whom it was to be expected that he would not break off the relation with his former master, but would avail himself of the proximity of the scenes of their respective ministries, to communicate to the old master out of the abundance of that which he had gained from the new. Coincident with the words, ὁ ἐστηκὼς καὶ ἀκούων αὐτοῦ, is the fact, that this speech of the Baptist contains unmistakeable points of contact with Christ’s conversation with Nicodemus; which has been very incorrectly explained, by supposing a mingling in of the subjectivity of the Evangelist, or that he lent his thoughts and words to the Baptist. Cf. with the words, δὸιδαμεν λαλοῦμεν, καὶ δὲ ἑωράκαμεν μαρτυροῦμεν, καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν ἡμῶν οὐ λαμβάνετε, in ver. 11, ver. 32 *here*; with ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς, in ver. 13, ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἐρχόμενος in ver. 31; with ver. 36, ὁ πιστεύων εἰς τὸν οὐτόν, ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον, ver. 15, ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται, ἀλλ’ ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον, and with the second part of this verse compare ver. 18. In the ἀκούων αὐτοῦ of the Baptist, we have an express declaration in what way this coincidence is to be explained. If we suppose that the Evangelist has ascribed his own words to the Baptist, it is not explained why the points of connection are almost all with that conversation with Nicodemus, of which the mind of the Apostle was just at this time particularly full. The disciples of the Baptist may be divided into two classes. It was a Divine appointment, that his heart was prepared by intercourse with the better part, when this temptation met him. The *standing* designates the passivity of the friend, who has nothing to do, but to hear and to rejoice.—With χαρᾶ χαίρει may be compared שְׁשָׁן שִׁש in Isa. Ixi. 10. The infinitive prefixed in Hebrew renders the verbal conception emphatic, Ewald, § 312; and the LXX. usually render it by the dative of the abstract noun derived from the verb. Joy is designated by χαρᾶ χαίρει as

the single feeling of the Baptist, in opposition to others which were expected by his disciples—joy, and only joy. The joy is fulfilled when it has reached its highest point, xv. 11, xvi. 24; 1 John i. 4; 2 John 12. There is not here a placing together of figure and thing signified, so that the application would be given in the words *αὐτη οὖν*, etc.; but the bride is from the first Zion, the bridegroom Christ, the friend of the bridegroom John. It is not said, Such joy, or an equal joy, is now granted me; but, This *my* joy is now fulfilled; and accordingly, even in what precedes, John must have been he who rejoices on account of the voice of the bridegroom. The words, from δέχων to νυμφίου, represent the relation in general; and the words, *αὐτη*, etc., declare that that which respects the position of John towards Christ has now just attained its complete realization, and lead to the conclusion, that his knowledge of Christ had immediately before received an accession, namely, by the communications of the Apostle John, and from what he had otherwise learned of Christ, in consequence of the close contact of their respective circles of influence.<sup>1</sup>—There can be no doubt that this declaration of John is based on the spiritual interpretation of the Song of Songs. The Song of Songs, which Josephus reckons without hesitation among the prophetic writings, is, together with the connected forty-fifth Psalm (cf. my Comm. ii. p. 118.), the only part of the Old Testament in which the relation of Christ to the Church is represented under the figure of the relation of the bridegroom to the bride: the bride, בָּתָה, in Song of Sol. iv. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, v. 1. We are led to the Song of Songs especially by the mention of the voice of the bridegroom: cf. Song of Sol. ii. 8, “The voice of my beloved”—what the voice of the bridegroom says, is recorded in vers. 10–14, after his appearance has been more exactly described—and ver. 2, “It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh; Open to me, my friend.” According to this passage, the voice of the bridegroom is to be considered as addressed to the bride. The voice of the bridegroom here is not to be traced to Jer. vii. 34, xvi. 9, xxv. 10, xxxiii. 11. For there the voice of the bridegroom and the bride

<sup>1</sup> Lampe: “Sicut Simeon rogabat dimitti in pace, quia oculi ejus videabant salutem Domini, Luc. ii. 29, ita nihil in terris desiderabat Johannes, ex quo vocem ipsam Angeli fœderis annunciantem pacem et salutem audierat.”

are inseparable, and both together designate the nuptial joy. From the Song of Songs also, v. 1, was derived the *friend* of the bridegroom ; for here the bridegroom addresses the *friends*, רעים. They are invited to participate in the loving intercourse between the bridegroom and the bride. This is a far more *real* reference than that to the Jewish Shoseben [= paranympth, companion], who had other things to do than to stand and hear the bridegroom's voice. In Song of Sol. v. 1, the same passage on which Rev. iii. 20 also is based, we have all together—the bride, the voice of the bridegroom, and the friend. Only the strongest prejudice will after these details be able to deny the reference to the Song of Songs, in which Matt. ix. 15, xxv. 1 sq. ; Rev. xxi. 2, 9, xxii. 17, coincide with our text.

Ver. 30. “He must increase, but I decrease.”—The more the glory of Christ was revealed, the more also the inferiority of John. This was not, however, to him, as to his disciples (Berleb. Bibel : “This becoming of less account oppressed them, for they thought it might involve them also. Such lofty notions lodge in our minds”), a cause of sorrow, but of joy ; for his Saviour's honour was to him of much greater importance than his own. As to the expression, compare 2 Sam. iii. 1, “But the house of David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.” The *must* is founded on the Divine counsel, as revealed in the prophecies of the Old Testament. Cf. remarks on iii. 14. The Baptist has especially Isa. lii. 13 in view : “Behold, My servant shall—be exalted and extolled, and be very high.”

Vers. 31, 32. “He that cometh from above is above all : he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth : He that cometh from heaven is above all. And what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth ; and no man receiveth His testimony.”—The words, ὁ ἀνωθεν ἐρχόμενος, do not designate a mission received from above—this the Baptist also had—but the possession of Divine nature. Cf. ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς, ver. 13 ; ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο, i. 14 ; and ὁ κύριος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, 1 Cor. xv. 47. On the words, *that is of the earth*, the Berleb. Bibel says, “And not of heaven, but a natural child of Adam like me.” It has been incorrectly remarked, “ἐκ τῆς γῆς, the first time, designates the origin or derivation ; the second and third times, it determines the manner of existence and of speaking.”

The words, ἐκ τῆς γῆς, designate rather the immutability of the existence : he is and remains of the earth ; and neither he himself, nor the wish of his followers, has power to alter the case. Entirely correspondent is ὁ ἔχων τὴν νύμφην, νυμφίος ἐστί, who is and remains the bridegroom. And Isa. vii. 8, 9, “For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin —And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah’s son,”—he is and remains so. There is here an opposition to vers. 5, 6, where the king of Syria and Ephraim had expressed the purpose of extending their dominion over Judah. The thoughts of men rise in vain against that existence which is ordained by the Lord. The expression, ἐκ τῆς γῆς, is from Ps. x. 18, “The man (cf. ver. 27, here) of the earth will no more oppress thee ;” on which it was remarked in my commentary : “**Ὦν** has the subordinate ideas of feebleness and weakness, which is still more plainly noted by the addition, *of the earth* ; *q.d.*, he who is sprung from the earth, who belongs to it—the man of the earth as opposed to the God of heaven.”—The antithesis to ὁ ἄνωθεν ἐρχόμενος ἐπάνω πάντων ἐστί is formed chiefly by ὁ ἀν ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἐστί. But the words which are added as an inference, καὶ ἐκ τῆς γῆς λαλεῖ, call forth another antithesis, in which the words ἐπάνω πάντων ἐστί receive their more exact definition from what follows ; that is, He is above all in so far as He testifies what He has heard and seen.—The Baptist also spoke not *merely* of the earth, he had higher aspirations ; but his was only a partial and fragmentary knowledge and prophecy, 1 Cor. xiii. 9 ; and notwithstanding these flashes of light, he remained on the whole bound to the earth in what he spoke. That in the main he belonged to this in his being and speaking, explains the fact of his later momentary perplexity with reference to Christ, Matt. xi. John also testified in a certain sense what he had heard and seen ; his testimony of Christ had not been revealed to him by flesh and blood, but by the Father in heaven ; but in the highest and fullest sense, there is only One who testifies what He has heard and seen—only One in whom this testifying is a well whose waters do not deceive—only the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father. Cf. on i. 18. Participation in the Godhead, and the coming from heaven, is the necessary basis of such true seeing, and hearing, and testifying. Out of con-

nection with Him, all human witnesses are blind and dumb, even if here and there they catch a glimpse or a word.—The words, “and no man receiveth His testimony,” form a strange and painful contrast to the preceding. The only true testimony, and no one receives it! All men, from the first to the last, ought to throng towards it; and in view of this fact, the small number vanishes of those who do really receive it. There is here an antithesis to the words of the disciples of the Baptist, *καὶ πάντες ἔρχονται πρὸς αὐτὸν*. That which seems so much to the disciples, is in truth an inconceivably small proportion; which can be explained only by the fact, that the thoughts and intents of the heart of man are evil from his youth up. The words have, however, a still more personal reference to the disciples, as the Berleburger Bibel says: “This is seen also in you. For, though you belong to the better class in comparison with others, yet think how you have allowed yourselves to be prejudiced.”—Several commentators, who were (unfortunately) preceded by Bengel, have assumed that from ver. 31 the Evangelist continues the discourse. Others have supposed that with the words of the Baptist are mingled, in a now no longer exactly distinguishable manner, the partly explanatory and partly amplifying reflections of the Evangelist. The ground, however, on which they support these hypotheses has been already removed in the remarks on ver. 29. Besides the authority of the Apostle, who ascribes all to the Baptist, and who represents him as speaking in the Present tense in vers. 32, 34, 35, it is positively against these views, that the discourse with which the Baptist retires from the stage and completes his testimony, makes an unsatisfactory impression without the necessary practical conclusion of an appeal to the consciences of his disciples, not less than the discourse of Christ to Nicodemus becomes a limbless trunk, if we suppose the Evangelist to speak from ver. 16. If we recognise that the Baptist had gone to school to his disciple, every ground is removed from such untenable assumptions.

Ver. 33. “He who receives His testimony, sets to his seal that God is true.”—That which the Baptist here says, is not spoken merely in general; but all is here, as in the conclusion of the conversation with Nicodemus, which is echoed here throughout, applied to the heart, and admonishes the disciples that they should relinquish the wrong position which they had assumed

towards Christ. A thing is sealed in common life for two objects : either to render it inaccessible and to place it under seal, Matt. xxvii. 66, or to confirm it. And thus there is in Scripture a double figurative and symbolical use of sealing. On the latter application of the seal, which alone can be regarded here, rest, *e.g.*, the following passages: John vi. 27; Rev. vii. 2; Rom. iv. 11; 1 Cor. ix. 2; 2 Cor. i. 22; Eph. i. 13.—In how far he who receives the testimony of Christ confirms that God is true, is declared in what follows, *viz.*, because God is revealed in Christ, and speaks through Him. Bengel correctly says, “*Cujus verbum est Messiae verbum,*” xii. 44, 45. According to this, he who makes Christ a liar makes God one also, who speaks through Him, 1 John v. 10. The disciples must be on their guard against such a great sin as this. Contrary to the connection with ver. 34, Olshausen says, “That God is true, performs all His promises, quiets all longing.”

Ver. 34. “For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure.”—*Απέστειλεν* is to be considered as emphatic. It refers to the Old Testament passages concerning the *מֶלֶךְ יְהוָה*. The words, from *He whom to of God*, do not offer a general proposition; for, thus rendered, they would not be suited to limit the sphere of Christ towards that of the Baptist, who was also sent from God; but they are equivalent to, *This person whom God hath sent.* Cf. ver. 17. If this is recognised, we are then justified in referring the words, *οὐ γὰρ ἐκ μέτρου, κ.τ.λ.*, likewise to the present case, without supposing an omission of the pronoun.—John proves that Christ speaks the words of God, or is His Revealer, by the fact, of which he had been personally assured by the appearance at the baptism: he had seen that at the baptism the Spirit descended and abode on Christ, i. 33. As in i. 34 he draws the conclusion from this fact, that Christ is the Son of God, so here, that He speaks the words of God. He does not, however, refer to that fact as in the past; but, on the ground of it, speaks rather of a continued relation—for God *gives* in the present case. *Ἐκ μέτρου* is to be considered so that the measure forms the point of issue. All others receive the Spirit only by measure, Rom. xii. 3 sq.<sup>1</sup> He

<sup>1</sup> Augustine: “Aliud habet iste; et quod habet ille, non habet iste. Mensura est, divisio quædam donorum est. Ergo hominibus ad mensuram datur, et concordia ibi unum corpus facit.”

who does not receive the Spirit by measure, is therefore raised above the grade of created beings; for to have the Spirit without measure is a Divine prerogative.

Ver. 35. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand."—Augustine: "The Father loveth the Son, but as a father loves a son, not as a master his servant—as the only-begotten, not the adopted son. What is meant by all things? That the Son is as great as the Father." On the words, "The Father loveth the Son," the Berleb. Bibel remarks, "As I sufficiently learned from the voice at the Jordan"—Matt. iii. 17, οὐτός ἐστιν ὁ νίος μου ὁ ἀγαπητός. The love of the Father to the Son has for its immediate consequence the declarations: "Kiss the Son," Ps. ii.; and, "Woe to the people that despiseth Thee." How must the disciples of John have been ashamed in view of the fact, that other affections had taken the place of love to Christ!—That *all things* is to be taken in the strictest sense, is shown by the parallel passages: xiii. 3; Matt. xi. 27, xxviii. 18, ἐδόθη μοι πᾶσα ἔξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς; 1 Cor. xv. 27; Rev. i. 18; and even by ver. 36, where, included under *all things*, the highest of all powers—the decision concerning salvation and condemnation—is especially ascribed to Christ. A limitation is the less admissible, since the proposition, in its unrestricted sense, is a direct result of the Sonship of God—the coming of Jesus from above, ver. 31, from heaven, which is the same as participation in the Godhead. These words, "and hath given all things into His hand," had an express reference to the disciples of John. How terrible is it to set ourselves in opposition to Him who has all things in His hand, who can deprive us of all good, and at last of eternal life, and can bring upon us all evil, and at last "enduring wrath"? Must he not be an enemy to his own welfare, who does not make it the chief end of his life to enter into, and abide in communion with Him?

Ver. 36. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that is not obedient to the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."—This was the word with which the Baptist dismissed his disciples. We may hope that the result was the same as in the case of Nicodemus. Like the latter, they are silent, and lay their hand upon their mouth: "Once have I spoken, but I will not answer."—The opposite to faith is unbelief; but the latter is here designated as

criminal disobedience: cf. Acts xiv. 2; Rom. xi. 30. The Son of God, as such, cannot do otherwise than demand faith; and woe to him who is not obedient to such demand.—“The wrath of God abideth on him.” This flows directly from the declaration that the Father loves the Son; for the love of the Father to the Son must take the form of unquenchable wrath towards those who despise the Son. The Berleb. Bibel, with many other expositors, gives the incorrect explanation: “The wrath of God abides on him, since it is by nature already upon him: no new condemnation is needed, for the old is sufficient, into which he has fallen in and with Adam, and is therefore by nature under wrath.” The thought is not, that the wrath which has already rested upon him, remains; but, that the wrath which he draws upon himself by disobedience to the Son has an abiding character. We are therefore not to read the Future, *μενεῖ*. The preceding *ὅψεται* is quite sufficient to determine the time. The abiding wrath here corresponds to *eternal* life, and is the unquenchable fire in Matt. iii. 12. The wrath, and the corresponding fire, pertain, according to the Baptist, in Matt. iii. 1-12, to the future, the day of judgment; cf. especially ver. 7 (1 Thess. i. 10). Even in the Old Testament passage, Ps. ii. 12, “Kiss the Son, lest He be angry,” the wrath proceeds from the relation to the Son. To the abiding wrath here, corresponds *ἡ ὄργὴ εἰς τέλος* in 1 Thess. ii. 16. We have the representation of such an abiding wrath in Isa. xxxiv. 10: “It (the fire) shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation the land shall lie waste.” A contrast to the wrath which, after it has once commenced, abides for ever, is formed by the transient anger in the Book of Wisdom, xvi. 5, where, with respect to the judgment of the serpents in the wilderness, it is said, *οὐ μέχρι τέλους ἔμεινεν ἡ ὄργὴ σου*: cf. also ch. xviii. 20 of the same book, where, with respect to the judgment averted by Phinehas, it is said, *ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐπὶ πολὺ ἔμεινεν ἡ ὄργὴ*. Contrary to the *ὅψεται* and the parallel passages, De Wette remarks, “It is not a future, but an immediate punishment, beginning with the unbelief, and without doubt internal, consisting of the inward discord of the soul which is not at peace with God.” Olshausen was of opinion that the absolute permanence is expressed only conditionally, in case the disobedience did not cease. But it is not

the sense of the Scripture that man can persevere in this disobedience as long as he pleases, and then suddenly bring it to a termination. There comes a decisive moment when the man has definitively fallen into disobedience, as is shown by the Scripture doctrine of the sin against the Holy Ghost. Since this may be at any moment, man is threatened at every instant by the danger of falling under the abiding wrath of God.

#### CHAP. IV. 1-42.

##### CHRIST'S CONVERSATION WITH THE SAMARITAN WOMAN.

Ver. 1. “When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, 2. (Though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples,) 3. He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.”—The *οὖν* in ver. 1 forms the connection with the preceding narrative, the central fact of which was, that Jesus had, during His stay in the land of Judea, a greater concourse than John : cf. ver. 26.—The hearing of the Pharisees is only adapted to be a motive to the action of Jesus, when we connect with it their inclination to dangerous, and even life-threatening persecutions. To such an inclination we are led also by the parallel passage, John vii. 1, *καὶ περιεπάτει ὁ Ἰησοῦς μετὰ ταῦτα ἐν τῇ Γαλιλαίᾳ οὐ γὰρ ἤθελεν ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ περιπατεῖν, ὅτι ἐζήτουν αὐτὸν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἀποκτεῖναι.* When Jesus, as soon as He is aware that it had come to the ears of the Pharisees that He made and baptized more disciples than John, straightway attributes this disposition to them, we cannot doubt that John had already become a sacrifice to their persecution ; for if they had not in this way made known their disposition, the conclusion of Jesus would have lacked a sure basis.—When it is said that Jesus, being threatened by the Pharisees, had left Judea and removed to Galilee, it is understood, that in Galilee the Pharisees had less influence than in Judea. This is explained by the greater proximity to the capital here—Jesus kept indeed at a considerable distance from it, at the extreme southern corner of the country—but still more from the circumstance, that the Roman government, content with the payment of the taxes, allowed freer play to the efforts of the Pharisees ; while Herod, on the other hand,

had inherited opposition to Pharisaism as a family tradition, and, as a native prince, was better acquainted with its practices. The motive for the persecution of the Baptist by Herod was a purely personal one; for he had left him free until he had reproved his sin, and he had probably rejoiced over his struggle against Pharisaism. On the other hand, the pharisaic opposition to the Baptist was one of principle: it was based on the circumstance, that he made and baptized disciples; and towards Jesus, who made and baptized more disciples, their hatred must have been all the more violent. That which is here intimated by John, obtains greater definiteness directly that it is regarded as the supplement of Matt. iv. 12 (Mark i. 14), ἀκούσας δὲ ὅτι Ἰωάννης παρεδόθη ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν. The *παρεδόθη* requires one to deliver up, and one to whom the delivery is made. The latter can only be Herod; and who is the *παραδιδόν*, can scarcely be doubtful even from Matthew. He is to be sought in Judea; for Jesus removes from Judea when He receives the account of the delivering up of the Baptist, evidently because the delivering power threatens Him also with danger. We learn that the Pharisees especially had reason to be embittered against the Baptist from Matt. iii. 7, where he salutes them as *γεννήματα ἔχιδνῶν*, and where the Sadducees occupy only a subordinate and parenthetical position. That which we conclude from Matthew is distinctly stated by John.—That *παραδιδόναι* alone may mean *to cast into prison*, is not proved. The usage generally, and especially of Matthew, in whose Gospel *παραδ*. always means *to deliver, give up*, is opposed to this rendering; and it is also decisive against it, that on this rendering, a motive is wanting for the resolution of Jesus. That John was cast into prison by Herod, could not furnish a motive to Jesus to betake Himself out of Judea into Galilee, into the territory of Herod. And it is not merely a removal on the part of Jesus, but an escaping, a fleeing from danger. With this meaning *ἀναχωρεῖν* always occurs. Cf. Matt. ii. 12, 14, 22, which latter passage is especially explanatory: *ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν*, of an escaping to Galilee on account of danger threatening in Judea. The escaping of Jesus to Galilee is comprehensible only if John was there delivered up to Herod.—But we have in Matthew also another distinct intimation that the Pharisees were accessory to the death of the Baptist, as, according to

Mark iii. 6, the Pharisees were connected with the Herodians in opposition to Jesus. In Matt. xvii. 12, the Lord says with respect to the Baptist, after He had previously been speaking of the scribes, *οὐκ ἐπέγνωσαν αὐτὸν, ἀλλ’ ἐποίησαν ἐν αὐτῷ ὅσα ηθέλησαν οὕτω καὶ ὁ νιὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου μέλλει πάσχειν ὑπ’ αὐτῶν.* Here it is evident that the Pharisees and scribes had had the *primas partes* in the catastrophe of John, so that the whole might be attributed to them.—Judea was then the principal seat of God’s people, Galilee occupying only a subordinate position; and Jesus went to Judea soon after His entrance on His ministry, and remained there a number of months, until persecution compelled Him to retire.—Jesus, by thus going out of the way of His enemies, taught by His example, as afterwards by His words, Matt. x. 23, that it is in some circumstances allowed, and is indeed a duty, to avoid persecution. Quesnel says, “There is a time to avoid the enemies of the truth, and a time to allow the truth to triumph over its enemies. It requires great grace not to err in this, and to do nothing untimely.—It is not merely allowed to flee danger on occasion, but this is often God’s order for the furtherance of His glory, and therefore commanded.—An humble withdrawal is often more difficult than a proud and glorious resistance.—It is to follow God, when we do not expose ourselves to suffering, if the time be not yet come. The result of the life of a pastor will plainly show, whether he retires from fear, or from fidelity to his office.” The notice in ver. 2, that Jesus did not Himself baptize, but only by means of His disciples, is not to indicate a misunderstanding of the Pharisees—for whom the distinction was a merely formal one, and without importance—but to guard the reader against a misapprehension; *q.d.*, I attribute the baptism simply to Jesus, although, etc. We are not to suppose that a false report had reached the Pharisees; for in iii. 22, the Evangelist himself attributes the baptism simply to Jesus; but what was a matter of indifference to the Pharisees, is not without interest in another relation. Jesus did not baptize individuals, in order that the truth may not be obscured; that He it is who baptizes all, even to the present day. Augustine says, “Ergo Jesus adhuc baptizat. Securus homo accedat ad inferiorem magistrum: habet enim superiorem magistrum.”

Ver. 4. “And He must needs go through Samaria.”—It is

of importance to note, that the conversation with the Samaritan woman occurred on a journey; as also the conversation with the representative of heathenism, the Canaanitish woman, Matt. xv. 21 sq., was occasioned by the circumstance that Jesus had for another object gone to her home,—ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς τὰ μέρη Τύρου καὶ Σιδῶνος. Jesus could not properly make missionary journeys into the Samaritan or heathen territory. That which He prescribes to His disciples applied also to Himself: εἰς ὅδον ἔθνων μὴ ἀπέλθητε, καὶ εἰς πόλιν Σαμαρειτῶν μὴ εἰσέλθητε· πορεύεσθε δὲ μᾶλλον πρὸς τὰ πρόβατα τὰ ἀπολωλότα οἴκου Ισραήλ. Matt. x. 5. The opportunities, however, which were afforded Him on such occasions, He not only could, but must, make use of, in order to give to the Apostles and to the Church generally, not only by His teaching, but also by His deeds, a rule of conduct, and a pattern for their subsequent action. The beginnings of the whole subsequent development of the Church were necessarily made during the earthly life of Christ, in order to prevent the thought, that the work had afterwards received another direction than that originally intended. The conversation with the Samaritan woman, with the following context, is chiefly typical of that of which we have an account in the eighth chapter of Acts, which fact is of paramount importance in judging of the occurrence; or, if we mistake its prophetic, typical character, we may well doubt whether much resulted from it, since it appears that the tender germs, unfostered and uncared for, must soon have perished. The didactic element, not the immediate effect, is the main thing, as here, so also in the Old Testament, with regard to the mission of Jonah to Nineveh. Cf. Christology 1, S. 467 f. [Transl. i. p. 406 sq.] It was there remarked with respect to this occurrence, “The ministry of Christ in Samaria bears the same relation to the later mission among this people, that the single instances of Christ’s raising the dead do to the general resurrection. The Lord did not afterwards foster the germs which had come forth among the Samaritans; He in the meantime left them altogether to their fate. That prelude was quite sufficient for the object which He had then in view; and nothing further could be done without violating the rights of the covenant-people, to which, in the conversation as recorded by John, the Lord as expressly pays attention as He does in Matt. x.”—It must not be

overlooked, that the occasion for the conversation with the Samaritan, as for the communication with the Canaanitish woman, was afforded by the fact that Jesus was compelled to go out of the reach of the Jewish opposition, since, viewed from this point also, the occurrence had a typical character. The obstinacy of the Jews causes the passing over of the Church to the heathen. Paul and Barnabas say to the Jews, in Acts xiii. 46, ὑμῖν ἦν ἀναγκαῖον πρῶτον λαληθῆναι τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἀπωθεύσθε αὐτὸν, καὶ οὐκ ἀξίους κρίνετε ἑαυτοὺς τῆς αἰωνίου ζωῆς, ἵδον στρεφόμεθα εἰς τὰ ἔθνη. This course was already indicated in the prophecies of the Old Covenant. When the Servant of God says, in Isa. xlix. 4, “I have laboured in vain, I have spent My strength for nought, and in vain; yet surely My judgment is with the LORD, and My reward with My God;” the Lord says to Him in ver. 6, “I will give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth:” in compensation for the stubbornness of the Jews, He gives Him the world for His inheritance. That the Lord Himself had this declaration in mind, to which, perhaps, the *κεκοπιακώς* in ver. 6 already refers (LXX. *κενῶς ἐκοπίασα*), is probable from the allusion to it in ver. 22, ἡ σωτηρία ἐκ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἔστι; but especially from the designation of Christ as the *σωτήρ τοῦ κόσμου* in ver. 42, which the Samaritans derive from the instruction of Christ, and which undoubtedly refers to this passage.

Ver. 5. “Then cometh He to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.”—According to ver. 8, Jesus did not enter the city itself; but here the environs are included under the same name. The case is similar in Gen. xiii. 12, according to which Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain of the Jordan,—*i. e.*, in their region; for, from the following statement, that he pitched his tent toward Sodom, it is evident that he continued his nomadic life. That Jericho, in Matt. xx. 29, comprises its environs, in which Jesus had rested, is shown by Luke xviii. 35. The Apostle characterizes the false nature of the Samaritans, by changing their city Sychem, by the alteration of a single letter, into a city of lies, *רְקַשׁ*. It is but to speak superficially when one designates this as “unworthy trifling.” It is of the greatest effect when the truth is thus pointedly expressed. It is thus

impressed indelibly on the mind and heart. Συχάρ is formed from Συχέμ, which, with Σίκιμα, occurs in the Alexandrine Version, and in Acts vii. 16; and, in order to adhere as closely as possible to the common name of the city, it is not written Συκάρ, as also in σαβαχθανί, Matt. xxvii. 46, χ is put for ρ. We nowhere find any indication that the Jews made such a change in the name, Sychem; and this fact is not without significance. If “the common Jewish people” had already introduced such a witticism (Robinson, Reise 3, 1, S. 342 [Biblical Researches]), the Apostle would not have shown any sympathy with such vulgarity. The case itself requires him to have first made such a change in a sacred sense, to which numerous analogies may be adduced from the Old Testament. I have already referred, in my *Contributions*, Pt. 2, p. 26, to the change of Bethel into Bethaven by Hosea; of Baalzebul, the inhabitant of the heavenly dwelling, in 2 Kings i. 2, to Baalzebub, the fly-god; and of the name of the Mount of Olives in 2 Kings xxiii. 13. But most strictly analogous is the name Achar, in 1 Chron. ii. 7; on which Bertheau remarks, “The Achan of the Book of Joshua has, by a slight alteration, become Achar, because it was an עוכֶר to Israel.” We find the suggestion of this change already in Josh. vii. 23, where it is said, “Why hast thou *troubled* us? the LORD shall *trouble* thee this day.” According to ver. 26, the valley received from the deed of Achan the name Achor, *distress*. It is a strictly analogous case, also, when Jeremiah, in vi. 28, transforms רירש, *the prince* (Isa. i. 23), into סרִים, *apostate*. Lücke objects, “If John had thus wished to inform us that he considered the whole nature of the Samaritans to be lying and deceit, why did he not intimate this by a single syllable to his readers? He must have done this the rather, since the subsequent representation betrays rather a favourable opinion of the Samaritans on the part of John.” But if John had directly explained the significance of the name Sychar, he would have ruined his design of giving an enigma on which the spiritual senses might be exercised. Such enigmas, without the solution added, we find also elsewhere in his Gospel; *e. g.*, his designation of himself as the disciple δον ἡγάπᾳ δ' Ἰησοῦς, which is evidently an interpretation of his name, John—Jesus=Jehovah. In substance, we certainly have the solution of the enigma. The Samaritans,

according to ver. 22, worship they know not what: here every essential knowledge of God, and interest in Him, is denied concerning them, in which all is said that can be said; and to this Συχάρ contains the commentary. By it their pretended descent from Jacob is declared to be a lie. But it might be maintained, with equal justice, that Matthew, on account of his narrative of the Canaanitish woman, entertained a “favourable opinion” of the heathen, as that John betrays “a favourable opinion of the Samaritans.” The real justification of the alteration of the name Sychem into Συχάρ, is contained moreover in Matt. x. 5, 6. For when the Lord here forbids His Apostles to go to the Samaritans, as well as to the heathen, when He says, *πορεύεσθε δὲ μᾶλλον πρὸς τὰ πρόβατα τὰ ἀπολωλότα οἴκου Ἰσραὴλ*,—and when He classes them with the heathen, and together with these opposes them to the house of Israel,—in all this there is a most decided rejection of the pretensions of the Samaritans. John has done nothing more than to give this decision a pointed expression, in the same spirit in which Jeremiah changes the name Babylon into Sheshach, and the name of the Chaldaean into Lebkamai, as the concentration of all that which he had prophesied of the future destiny of Babylon and the Chaldaeans.

Sychar is designated as near to the parcel of ground which Jacob gave to his son Joseph. This notice is not founded on a “false interpretation of biblical passages,” nor on “traditional improvement” of their contents; but it is taken simply from the Old Testament. It is said in Gen. xxxiii. 18, 19, “And Jacob came safe to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-aram, and pitched his tent before the city. And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, from the children of Hamor, Shechem’s father, for an hundred pieces of money (Kesitah).” Jacob remained at this place for a number of years, and Dinah here grew up from a child to a young woman. In Gen. xlvi. 22, Jacob further says to Joseph, “Moreover, I have given to thee one portion [of land] above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.” “A portion of land” is here designated by סכֶשׁ, in allusion to the name of the city, near which the field was situated. The LXX. has taken the delicate allusion too coarsely, and has

directly translated Σύκιμα. שׁופְךָ, which was better understood by John than by those expositors, who would lay to his charge a contradiction to the Old Testament, is the prophetical Praeterite. The future is as certain to the patriarch as the past. He speaks as the representative of the nation. In token of his love, Jacob rewards Joseph with the only piece of land in Canaan which at that time he could justly call his own. But since the Shechemites had appropriated the strip of land, the taking of it must necessarily go hand in hand with the giving. The last passage is Josh. xxiv. 32, "And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem."

Ver. 6. "Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with the journey, sat thus on the well: it was about the sixth hour."—A well or spring of Jacob does not occur in the Old Testament; though we learn from it, that it was the custom of the patriarchs to dig wells,—this being narrated of Abraham in Gen. xxi., and of Isaac in Gen. xxvi. Yet the existence of the well brings with it a certain probability that it was dug by Jacob. There can scarcely be a doubt, that the well still called Jacob's is identical with the genuine "Jacob's well," which it is acknowledged to be by the Samaritans; Ritter 16, S. 648. "Its position," says Ritter, S. 656, "with respect to the city, on the eastern side of which there is still a high road to Galilee, whither Jesus was going with His disciples, agrees so exactly, that all the circumstances are in favour of the identity of this ancient monument." The digging of this well must have been attended with great labour and difficulty. Maundrell says, "It is hewn in a solid rock, and is about nine feet in diameter and a hundred and five feet deep, with fifteen feet of water."<sup>1</sup> Now, how did such a work come to be undertaken in a region which, compared with the rest of Palestine, has a particularly abundant supply of water (Robinson, Researches, p. 393), "in the immediate neighbourhood of so many natural fountains, and in a place which at the present day is irrigated by brooks of running water, which descend from the fountain

<sup>1</sup> The well is now partly filled up. A more recent measurement gives a depth of seventy-five feet, and the spring-water has now failed. Ritter, S. 656.

higher up in the valley?" (Robinson.) To this question hardly any other answer can be given than this: that the well was dug by one who, separated from the inhabitants of the country, wished to have his own supply of water, and at the same time, by the digging of the well, to prove his right of possession, of which the well would be a monument.—The present Jacob's well is half a league distant from the city; and the question arises, how the Samaritan woman came to fetch water from it, "when there were so many springs in the immediate environs, and when she must have directly passed one of these springs midway." It is only an evasion of the difficulty to suppose that the woman might not have dwelt in the city, but near to the well, or that the city may have been more widely extended; in opposition to which is not merely the fact, that there are no ruins between Naplous and Jacob's well (*Robinson, Biblical Researches*), but, still more, the improbability that the Shechemites would have resigned to Jacob a piece of ground in the immediate vicinity of the city. The correct answer is afforded by the words of the woman herself. She is zealous for the honour of the well. It is a mark of piety that she is not afraid of the distance; in addition to which it may be remarked, that the very absence of any apparatus for drawing, shows that the well did not serve for common use. To her the water was sacred. Even at the present day, there is in Naplous, besides the Jacob's well, a Jacob's spring, to which "beneficial effects" are attributed, according to Bargès, in a work to be quoted presently, S. 93. It was afterwards more convenient to transfer the sacred water into the city.—Jesus was "wearied with the journey." P. Anton says, "He was to bear the whole burden of life, as life has now become. Thus it is also with this weariness. And this believers love to read, when they are wearied, that they may think of their Head." It must be especially taken into view, that Jesus was compelled to the journey which produced this weariness by the stubbornness of the Jews, and that the sorrow of His soul at this, "ye would not," was still more the cause of His fatigue than the mere bodily exertion. This weariness must have placed vividly before His mind the words of the servant of God in Isa. xlix. 4, and have called forth a desire for the promised recompense, a thirst for the souls of the *ἀλλογενεῖς*.—Jesus seated Himself

thus on the well. "The rest of Jesus Christ," remarks Quesnel, "is as mysterious and as abundant in goodness as His weariness. He awaits a soul wearied in the ways of sin, in order to give it a rest, which it seeks not and knows not." *Thus* is equivalent to, in consequence of this weariness; or, weary as He was, in this state of fatigue. After a preceding participial sentence, *οὐτως* serves to *resume* the same in the main sentence: Buttmann, S. 262. Other explanations of *οὐτως* are too far-fetched and forced; and passages like Acts xxvii. 17 are too evidently analogous for much importance to be laid on the objection of Fritzsch, that *οὐτως*, when it *resumes*, always stands at the beginning. There is no logical reason for this; and the later position of *οὐτως* here, where it might have been omitted, softens the emphasis.—It was surely not by chance that Jesus seated Himself directly on Jacob's well. In a spiritual sense, He was Himself the well of Jacob; and that He had this in mind, is shown by ver. 10. It had therefore a symbolical significance that He took his seat there; and this is the more natural supposition, since the woman also was led thither by a religious motive. It is of not less significance, that in the Old Testament, Jehovah is represented as the well of Israel. Thus first in Deut. xxxiii. 28, "And Israel dwelleth safely, only the well of Jacob." The explanation, *the* well of Jacob is for Jacob, who is like a well, does not give an appropriate sense, for one cannot be declared to inhabit a well. God is also designated as the dwelling of Israel in the immediately preceding verse: "A Dwelling is the God of old, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Cf. Ps. xc. 1, v. 4. Jehovah is also represented as the fountain of living waters for Israel in Jer. xvii. 13; and in Ps. xxxvi. 9 it is said, "With Thee is the fountain of life." That which applies to Jehovah, applies also, according to the conception of Christ which is stamped with especial distinctness on the Gospel of John, to Christ, in whom the Jehovah of the Old Covenant appeared in the flesh; and thus the thought was more natural of Christ as the true well of Jacob. The woman was seeking, at the ordinary Jacob's well, "living water," in a higher sense than usual; and Christ, by seating Himself on this well, indicated that the true living water was to be found only in Him, as the true well of Jacob.—"And it was about the sixth hour,"—therefore about noon.

According to Bengel, the reason is stated in these words why Jesus was wearied, and why the woman sought water, and the disciples food. But, according to the analogy of i. 40, xix. 14, and the whole character of the Gospel, the statement of the hour indicates rather the deep significance of the following fact. John certainly, in making it, has much less in view the fact itself, than its prophetic character. On this occasion, Christ for the first time actually proved Himself to be the “Saviour of the world ;” and that this is the kernel of the fact, is significantly indicated by the closing words of the narrative.

Ver. 7. “There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus saith unto her, Give Me to drink.”—The words, *ἐκ τῆς Σαμαρείας*, are not without significance; as likewise the designation of the woman, in ver. 9, as *ἡ γυνὴ ἡ Σαμαρεῖτις*. The woman was from Shechem, as is evident from what follows; but she is not regarded here as a Shechemite, but as a Samaritan, as the representative of her whole nation. The words, “Give Me to drink,” are to be taken, primarily, as understood by the woman. But that behind this another spiritual sense was hidden, is evident from the fact, that in the further course of the conversation the satisfaction of the bodily need, which certainly existed, is entirely disregarded. That which Jesus says of meat in ver. 34, applies also to drink; for His peculiar drink, His dearest refreshment, was the salvation of souls. This drink the woman, as the type of her nation, is to furnish Him by entering into the plan of salvation; and the living water which He properly desires, He will first Himself give, and then drink it from the well which He has formed. The passages of the Old Testament are analogous in which the services due to the Lord are represented by the symbol of nourishment offered to Him, as in the case of the shew-bread and the meat-offering. Cf. my work on the Lord’s day, S. 52 sq. In the New Testament, Matt. xxi. 18, 19: “Now in the morning, as He returned into the city, He *hungered*. And when He saw a fig-tree in the way, He came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig-tree withered away.” The hunger is here, primarily, bodily hunger; but this feeling passes over immediately into that of spiritual hunger. And this is exactly the case with respect to the thirst here; for the bodily necessity serves in both

cases only as the preliminary stage of the spiritual. John xxi. 5 also is analogous. When Jesus there says to His disciples, "Children, have ye any meat?" His desire is for the spiritual meat which they are to afford Him, and the spiritual refreshment which they are to prepare for Him, by their walking in the Spirit. Cf. my Commentary on the Apocalypse, ii. 2, S. 183. The spiritual under-current in the double sense of the words was already perceived by Augustine: "Ille, qui bibere quærebatur, fidem ipsius mulieris sitiebat." Quesnel says, "It is the divine thirst for the salvation of souls which chiefly oppresses Him, and which He causes to be served by the bodily thirst." The Berleburger Bibel says, "Thou knewest well, O Love, that this woman would come to draw water; on which account Thou didst seat Thyself there, in order to have the pleasure of giving it to her.—But what should she give Thee, O Love, to drink? Alas! says this wearied, adorable Saviour, I have sought destitute souls among the Jews, the people to whom I paid such high regard, but found scarcely any. Therefore I desired, O woman, that thou mightest be of the number, and mightest give Me to drink." This connection of the request, "Give Me to drink," with the fruitless ministry among the Jews, is especially to be regarded.—The statement of our text points to John as an eyewitness. The Berleb. Bibel says, "There cometh a woman, a lost sheep. John speaks as though he still saw her."—We have here the first of the seven words of Jesus to the woman of Samaria. The number seven is certainly no more accidental than the *ten* commandments, the *seven* beatitudes, the *seven* petitions of the Lord's Prayer, the *seven* parables in Matt. xiii., and the *seven* last words of Jesus on the cross. It shows that all is here numbered and weighed,—nothing opposed to the object of Jesus is introduced in the course of the conversation, the thread of which He retains in His own hand.<sup>1</sup>

Ver. 8. "For His disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat."—According to the current hypothesis, these words are to explain how Jesus came to make the request of the woman, "Give Me to drink." But the disciples, had they been present,

<sup>1</sup> Bengel first called attention to the number seven here: "Ab hac quæ indifferens videtur compellatione septima mox colloquii vicissitudine, præcise dum discipuli veniunt. Jesus rem mirabiliter perducit ad summum illud: Ego sum Messias, ver. 26."

would scarcely have been able to draw water from a well more than a hundred feet deep, for which, according to ver. 11, there was no apparatus. It is certainly a very improbable supposition, that such an apparatus was part of their equipment for the journey, and that they had taken it into the city with them ! The key to the *γάρ* is contained rather in the words, “ the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans,” in the verse immediately following ; and that the disciples were gone into the city accounts for the fact, that Jesus entered into conversation with the woman. To this we are led by their surprise on their return, ver. 27 ; which shows that their presence would have had a disturbing influence, and would have intimidated the woman. Jesus is careful to bring the conversation to a conclusion before they have returned. The Lord had probably sent them away purposely (as Abraham, in Gen. xxii. 5, dismisses his servants, and Jacob, in Gen. xxix. 7, seeks to remove the herdsmen to a distance); which conclusion is favoured by the circumstance, that the business which they transacted in the city might have easily been done by one or two. “ O Love,” says the Berleb. Bibel, “ Thou desirest to have no witnesses to the loving conference which Thou holdest with this woman, in order to persuade her to give herself up entirely to Thee.” It seems, however, that the statement, “ His disciples were gone away unto the city,” is to be understood with one exception ; viz., that John, whose presence was not disturbing, because he clung so entirely to Jesus, was present at the conference. That this is not expressly mentioned, is explained by the fact, that John everywhere in the Gospel seeks to hide himself ; but, indirectly, the presence of John is attested by the exact and vivid account which he is able to give of the circumstances. If John was present, it is at once explained why, in Acts viii. 14, it is John, together with Peter, the chief of the Apostles, who is deputed to the Samaritans.

Ver. 9. “ Then saith the woman of Samaria unto Him, How is it that Thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria ? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.”—We must not suppose the woman to speak ironically, in order to dismiss the request, as Lücke remarks : “ The woman of Samaria seems to wish to refuse, in an irritating manner, the service of drawing the water.” Jesus, who knew

what was in man, would not have entered into further conversation with her, if she had not had a heart open and susceptible to the truth. She expresses her wonder that a Jew should request a service of love from her; and a background to such wonder is formed, without doubt, by the presentiment that one is here standing before her who is exalted above the common type of the Jews.—She does not say, I cannot give Thee to drink because we are at enmity with the Jews, but she seeks only to know how it is that He requests such a service of her,—proceeding correctly on the assumption, that the request presupposes an acknowledgment of fellowship, no less than compliance with it.—The Apostle also, whose remark it is, “for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans,” attributes the cause of the hostile relation to the Jews. It is *friendly* intercourse which is spoken of; for ver. 8 shows that the intercourse of trade is not excluded. This relation continues even to the present day; for Robinson says, the Samaritans do not eat, drink, marry, or have any intercourse with the Jews, except in matters of trade.

Ver. 10. “Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewst the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water.”—The woman is wondering that Jesus, although a Jew, requests her to give Him to drink, and she here receives still more reason for wonder, when Jesus offers her to drink. It must have been evident to her, that here there was something which could not be measured by the rule of the common relation between Jews and Samaritans. In the definition of the “gift of God,” the expositors have generally resigned themselves to mere guess-work; but that no other than Christ Himself can be understood, is shown first by the Old Testament passage, Isa. ix. 6, “Unto us a Son is given,” LXX. *vìos ἐδόθη ἡμῖν*. The existence of such a passage would be beforehand probable, because otherwise we should be in suspense as to the expression of Christ; and we are led especially to Isa. ix. 6 by the circumstance, that our Lord has already referred to this passage in iii. 16, in the words, *τὸν vìos αὐτοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ ἐδωκεν*. A second ground is afforded in what follows: “and who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink;” in which the Lord explains Himself more definitely. It is the person

of Christ which is here spoken of, and therefore Christ must Himself be the gift of God. Calvin, with perfect correctness, remarks, “Posterius est quasi interpretatio prioris. Hoc enim singulare Dei erat beneficium, præsentem Christum habere, qui vitam æternam secum ferebat. Sensus clarior erit, si vice copulæ particulam exegeticam supponas. Si scires donum Dei, nempe quisnam sit qui tecum loquitur.” It is, moreover, to be observed, that it is not a special gift of God to the woman that is spoken of, as if “the benefit” were meant, of “God’s bringing her into connection with Him,” but it is a general benefit, of which the woman may become a partaker. On what account Christ merits to be designated as the gift of God to the human race, is evident from what follows, according to which He is the bestower of the highest of all gifts, the living water, by which alone the thirsty and fainting soul may be refreshed.—“Living water” [Eng. Vers. “running water”] stands for spring-water in Lev. xiv. 5. In the spiritual sense, it designates life, a powerful, blessed existence, untroubled by obstructions. *Life* occurs in the same relation as *living water* here, in the parallel passages: i. 4, ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν; v. 40, οὐ θέλετε ἐλθεῖν πρός με, ἵνα ζωὴν ἔχητε; xx. 31. An explanation is given directly in Rev. vii. 17: “The Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters,” ζωῆς πηγὰς ὑδάτων. The living water in our text is as it were explained here by life-water, water which consists in life. The same is denoted also in Rev. xxii. 1, “And he showed me a pure river of water of life;” and in xxi. 6, the water is life according to the express explanation of the writer. In Ezek. xlvi., the effect of the water which proceeds from the temple in Zion, and flows through the desert into the Dead Sea, is described as life. The idea of life is also interchangeable with that of salvation : cf. Isa. xii. 3, where the wells of *salvation* are spoken of, which are to be opened in the time of the Messiah: cf. Ps. lxxxvii. 7. In Isa. xliv. 3, “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring,” the blessing corresponds to the water, and is equivalent to life and salvation ; and the Spirit is mentioned as being the chief form in which the blessing is bestowed, the ground of all life and salvation for the people of God. In John vii. 38 also, the living

water does not itself denote the Holy Spirit, ver. 39, but the Holy Spirit is considered only as being the chief power by which the salvation or blessedness is effected.—When Christ ascribes to Himself the full power of imparting living water, He claims for Himself that which belongs to no mortal, but to the Divine prerogative; for Jehovah alone is represented in Jer. xvii. 13 as the fountain of living waters for Israel. If we take this dignity of Christ into view, the depth of His condescension will the more sink into our hearts.—“This,” says Calvin, “is a wonderful instance of His goodness. For what was there in this wretched woman, that from a harlot she should suddenly become a disciple of the Son of God?”

Ver. 11. “The woman saith unto Him, Sir, Thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast Thou that living water? 12. Art Thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?”—The mode of address by *κύριε* is here new, and shows that a foreboding suspicion is rising in the mind of the woman, as to the high dignity of the person who is standing before her. The Berleb. Bibel: “This mode of address, *Lord*, shows that He had obtained a certain supremacy over her.” On the other hand, however, the woman is not yet able to enter into the meaning of Christ’s words, but she thinks, What can He mean by living water? This well is not accessible to Him. In this she has the advantage. In order to be able to give a better water, He must be greater than the patriarch Jacob. And how could this be possible? And yet there was in the manner of Jesus an imposing dignity, which did not allow her to give way to the thought of an empty assumption on His part; and in her perplexity, she asks Jesus Himself for enlightenment.—When she calls Jacob the father of the Samaritans, she shows herself to be truly an inhabitant of Sychar, the city of falsehood. The rejection of this assertion is contained indirectly, as in Matt. x. 5, 6 (Bengel: “sic sibi persuaserant Samaritani: falso, Matt. x. 5 sq.”), so here in ver. 22; for of real descendants of Jacob there could not be denied all essential knowledge of God, the sphere of which was extended as widely as the posterity of Jacob. The reasons which favour the heathen origin of the Samaritans, are laid down in my *Contributions* (Beitr. 2, S. 3 sq.). It is shown by Ezra iv. 9,

10, that at the time of their return from exile the Samaritans had not reached the pretension of a descent from Jacob; and that they afterwards averred the truth when this seemed more to their interest than a falsehood, is proved by the quotations in the Beitr. S. 6 sq. The physiognomy also of the present Samaritans condemns the assertion of their Israelitish descent. Wilson says (in Ritter, S. 651), "Most of them have a strong family likeness; their features, especially, were entirely different from the Jewish, and they had much rounder forms." But, nevertheless, "the family of the priest wished to trace their descent to the tribe of Levi, and all the rest to Ephraim and Manasseh." Robinson likewise remarks, "The physiognomy of those we saw was not Jewish." The detailed statement in the *Contributions* has been opposed by Kalkar (in Pelt's *Mitarbeiteren* iii. 3, S. 24 sq.), and Keil in his commentary on 2 Kings xvii. 24, who have anew asserted the opinion, that the remnant of the Israelites who remained in the country were amalgamated with the heathen colonists. The only proof, of any plausibility, which they bring in support of this opinion, is the following. According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 9, there was still in the cities, at the time of Josiah, a remnant of the Ten Tribes; and such is implied also by the expedition of Josiah into the former land of Israel, for the destruction of the monuments of the earlier idolatry, in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6, cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 15–20. There were therefore, it is thus concluded, remnants of Israelites, who could mingle with the Samaritans, and who must have mingled with, and have been lost among them, since we find no trace of them afterwards. But this is a weak argument. Samaria is only a small part of the former territory of the Ten Tribes. That in the other parts there were still to be found remnants of the former Israelitish population, would have been sufficiently established *a priori*, even if it had not been historically attested; but, so far as we are able to follow these remnants, they have no connection whatever with the Samaritans. According to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 9, they paid the temple-tribute at Jerusalem. According to 2 Chron. xxxv. 18, there came to Josiah's Passover, besides Judah, whatever still remained of Israel. When Josiah, favoured by very peculiar circumstances (cf. Thenius, on 2 Kings xxiii. 19, 20), undertakes an expedition into the former land of Israel, in order in those parts of it

not settled by the Samaritans to destroy the monuments of former idolatry in the ruins of the former cities (Bertheau on 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6), we are led to the conclusion, that the kings of Judah regarded themselves as the legitimate heirs of the fallen Israelitish kingdom, and hence certainly made efforts to draw to themselves the remnants of the Israelitish population. Where these remnants afterwards were, whether they stayed unobserved in the country, and were afterwards amalgamated with those who returned from the Babylonish exile, or whether they migrated to Judah, it cannot be ours to prove. From the tenacity of the Israelites in the assertion of their national character, so abundantly proved by history, we are not justified in assuming on such slight grounds an amalgamation of the remnants of the Ten Tribes with the Samaritans. Experience shows that there is a great aversion to so complete a surrender of nationality, even among those descendants of Jacob to whom very little indeed remains of the real substance of national life. With the overthrow of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes was thrown down the wall of separation between them and Judah, so that they were again open to all the influences which came from thence; and thus it is the less probable that they would throw themselves into the arms of the Samaritans, in whom they would perceive only intruders.—The *θρέματα* comprise at the same time the servants, who must have accompanied the herds. In Gen. xii. 16, the men-servants and maid-servants are enclosed on either hand by the herds, on which it was their duty to attend.

Ver. 13. “Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: 14. But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”—All earthly happiness resembles water, which can only afford a transitory satisfaction. In the words, “shall never thirst,” the thirst designates the condition of wholly unsatisfied desire, of absolute godlessness; since in believers there is always a background, however deeply hidden, of satisfaction (“nunquam prorsus aridi;” Calvin). How necessary such a limitation is, is shown by the circumstance, that Jesus Himself, in xix. 29, exclaims διψῶ; and that, as an exemplar of His followers, He trod the darkest

paths of suffering. The words, “ shall never thirst,” receive the most glorious fulfilment in the kingdom of glory, as, with respect to the condition of the elect in the future existence, the heavenly blessedness, it is said in Rev. vii. 16, *οὐ πεινάσουσιν ἔτι, οὐδὲ διψήσουσιν ἔτι*, and in Rev. xxi. 6, with respect to the time when God makes all things new, *ἐγὼ τῷ διψῶντι δώσω ἐκ τῆς πηγῆς τοῦ ὕδατος τῆς ζωῆς δωρεάν*. But God does not give His people any mere “ letters of credit for happiness;” for even in the troubled period of this life He is ever in Christ, “ the well of life” for His people. And there is never a time when they wish they had not been born, or when they are tempted to put an end to their existence. The Old Testament passage is Isa. lv. 1, where, with respect to the Messianic salvation, it is said, “ Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters;” a passage to which the Lord also refers in John vii. 37, *ἔάν τις διψᾷ, ἐρχόσθω πρός με καὶ πινέτω*, and where the words *πρός με* are added from ver. 3; also in Matt. xi. 28, v. 6; cf. Christology 2, S. 379 [*Translation*, ii. p. 342]. The Old Testament passage, Isa. xl ix. 10 (cf. xl viii. 21), is also to be regarded: “ They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor sun smite them; for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them;” to which the Lord also refers in John vi. 35: *ὁ ἐρχόμενος πρός με οὐ μὴ πιεινάσῃ· καὶ ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμὲ οὐ μὴ διψήσῃ πάποτε*.—The water becomes a fountain: the gift of salvation, which comes primarily from without and from above, becomes immanent in the heart, and is as though it had an independent origin therein. In Song of Sol. iv. 12, the bride, the Church of God in the Messianic period, is already, in designation of the fulness of salvation and blessing which not merely flows towards it, but dwells within it, called “ a spring shut up, a fountain sealed;” and in ver. 15, “ a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.”—The water of the well springs up into everlasting life. It is represented as a well-spring, which, in distinction from the common springs, which rise only a few feet above the earth, reaches from the present to the future existence. In Rev. xxii. 1, the stream of the water of life proceeds “ from the throne of God and of the Lamb:” here, *whence* it comes is designated; in our text, *whither* it goes,—the latter being grounded in the former. The water which comes from above

must mount upwards again ; as Burgensis has already remarked, “The Holy Spirit, as the author and the source of this water, dwells in heaven ; hence it is no wonder if the water which He pours out upon the hearts of men springs up from earth towards heaven, yea, even to God, into everlasting life.”

Ver. 15. “The woman saith unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.”—She does not know what the water is which Jesus offers her ; but thus much she perceives, that it must be something very good, and that the desire for its possession will be satisfied. She is perfectly sincere in all this, and we lose the key to the position which Christ takes towards her, if we discover in her answer “a certain jesting ironical *naivété*.” The woman brings the water which Jesus offers her the more into connection with the water of Jacob’s well, because this also, in her opinion, had not a purely natural signification, but was better and of more saving efficacy than the common water.

Ver. 16. “Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.”—Since Jesus, as is shown by what follows, penetrated into the relations of the woman, this direction can have this object only, to call forth the answer, foreseen by Christ, *οὐκ ἔχω ἄνδρα*; and with this answer is connected the declaration of Christ, in which He made known His superhuman nature, and at the same time awakened the conscience of the woman, as the condition of the impartation of the living water. The word *ἄνδρα* must be considered as emphatic. The husband —this was the sore point of the woman, and her counterpart, the people of the Samaritans. P. Anton remarks, “The emotion was here aimed at which the Mystics very finely call *momentum compunctionis* ; when the right *aculei* enter, when the right nail is driven into the conscience, this is *compunctio*.—It was great wisdom in Christ also, that He pricks, as it were, only a single sore in particular, so that pain is caused at the same time in all the others.” The Berleburger Bibel says, “He places His finger on the wound, but with so much goodness and gentleness, that it seems as if He feared to give it pain. O what goodness to win sinners!”—Ver. 17. “The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband : 18. For thou hast had five husbands ; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband : in that saidst

thou truly." Even the great number of husbands indicates that there lies hidden in the words, *πέντε ἄνδρας ἔσχες*, a charge against the woman, that even then her state was a sinful one. Add to this the *εἰπέ μοι πάντα ὅσα ἐποίησα* of the woman in ver. 29, which can scarcely be referred only to her connection with the sixth man. It leads to the conclusion that the former marriages were dissolved by her own fault; for that it was a fivefold marriage-relation, is shown by the opposition to the present connection. The words *καλῶς εἶπας* and *ἀληθὲς εἴρηκας* refer to the objective truth of what is said by the woman, and disregard the circumstance, that she "hides her shame under the ambiguity of the phrase *ἄνδρας ἔχειν*." In that all the relations of life of a woman personally unknown to Him were clearly discovered to Christ, He thus proved Himself to be He, who even during His life on earth was in heaven, iii. 13.—By a divine arrangement, the relations of her nation were portrayed in the inferior relations of this woman, and precisely on this account she was chosen by Christ as its representative. She had had five husbands; and he whom she now had was not her husband, not having deigned to connect himself with her in marriage. So with the nation. It had previously been in fivefold spiritual marriage with its idols, and this marriage had been dissolved as frivolously as it had been concluded. The people sued for marriage with Jehovah; but this was denied them, because they did not belong to Israel. The declaration, "Thou hast had five husbands," is in remarkable accordance with 2 Kings xvii. 24; according to which passage the king of Assyria brought colonists from exactly five nations, from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria; and of these five nations each had its peculiar divinity, or, according to the ancient language of the East, its husband, ver. 31. Josephus says, in his Antiquities, ix. 14, § 3, *οἱ δὲ μετοικισθέντες εἰς τὴν Σαμάρειαν Χουθᾶῖοι . . . ἔκαστοι κατὰ ἔθνος ἕδιον θεὸν εἰς τὴν Σαμάρειαν κομίσαντες—πέντε δὲ ἥσαν—καὶ τούτους, καθὼς ἦν πάτριον αὐτοῖς, σεβόμενοι.* The coincidence of the relations of the woman with those of the nation is truly too remarkable to be passed by as merely accidental. With the words, "and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband," is to be compared ver. 22, where legitimacy is denied to the connection of the Samaritans with their present God. So as

to Συχάρ in ver. 5, if the whole religious condition of the Samaritans is a lie, this must refer first and principally to the fundamental relation of the people to Jehovah. We have already proved that the Samaritan woman appears even in what precedes as a representative of the nation, and that the occurrence has a prophetic character; and therefore we may all the more expect to see in her circumstances a picture of those of the nation. That Jesus sat on the well in order to point to Himself as the true well of Jacob; that His first word, *δός μοι πιεῖν*, has a spiritual meaning; and that He offers the woman "living water" in the spiritual sense, we have already seen. With a terminology so symbolical throughout, the symbolical rendering of our passage, which does not prejudice the historical truth, but has it for its basis, is not opposed, but favoured, by the presumptive evidence. That the expounders of the New Testament have often a great dread of such renderings, is explained by the fact, that they have learnt so little in the school of the Old Testament, and on this account cannot free themselves from their "Occidentalism." Of attempts to introduce again the antiquated allegorical explanation, we need not speak. Explanation of an allegory is widely different from allegorical explanation.

Ver. 19. "The woman saith unto Him, Sir, I perceive that Thou art a prophet. 20. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."—We are not to attribute to these words the object of changing the unpleasant personal turn of the conversation. The fact that Christ engages Himself so far with her, and ver. 29, where she confesses her sins with entire frankness, are decisive against this view. We are also not to assume that she here introduces a religious point, which was without significance in respect of that which was primarily in question, *viz.*, her relation to Christ; as Calvin supposes, that since she had perceived Christ to be a prophet, she wished to be instructed by Him in general with reference to the true worship of God. The word of Christ has touched the woman too deeply for her to follow the mere impulse of a general "religious curiosity;" and the question which she here broaches, has far rather a direct reference to her relation to Christ. She has recognised that Jesus is a prophet; but before she engages further with Him, she must

obtain a clear view of that point which forms the wall of separation between Jews and Samaritans. If her fathers were right in maintaining that the true worship of all is restricted to Mount Gerizim, she must hesitate before entering into further conversation with a Jew, and therefore this obstacle must first be removed out of the way. The question is not of a mere isolated difference of opinion, but of a dogma, which excluded the Samaritans, whose representative the woman is here also, from the well of Jacob, from the life in God, and from access to Christ.—*On this mountain.* She refers to Gerizim, which was in view. The temple which had stood there for some centuries (*Beiträge 2, S. 2 sq.*) was destroyed by John Hyrcanus, and not rebuilt; but the sanctity of the place remained, and it was esteemed by the Samaritans as the centre of their religion. Even at the present day it is one of the five articles of faith of the Samaritans, that Gerizim is the Kiblah (*Ritter, S. 650*).

Ver. 21. “Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.”—Jesus intimates that the point of dispute between the Jews and Samaritans, on which the woman laid such weight, will in the future lose all significance. That which is so near its end, need not now hinder her from following the impulse of her heart, need not now stand as a dividing wall between her and Him who will give her living water. The words, *believe Me*, are connected with those of the woman, *Thou art a prophet*, and summon her to follow out this confession. The prophet is as such **נָבָע**, 1 Sam. iii. 20, *πιστός*, Eccl'us. xlviii. 22, where Isaiah is called *πιστὸς ἐν ὄρασει αὐτοῦ*, and 1 Maccabees xiv. 41. With the words, *the hour cometh*, compare Isa. lxvi. 18, “It shall come (the time or hour) to gather all (heathen) nations and tongues: and they shall come, and see My glory:” with the hour to gather the heathen coincides the abolishing of the distinction of localities. In *προσκυνήσετε* both the Jews and the heathen are addressed. It is decisive against the assumption, that *προσκυνήσετε* applies only to the Samaritans, “who by their future conversion were to be released from their service at Gerizim, but not to be brought to the service in Jerusalem,” that on this view the thought would be a natural one, that the local obligation of worship would still continue for the Jews, while, according to the corresponding declaration in ver. 23, it

was to cease altogether in the future. And, according to this view, the answer would not be a complete one; for the woman had not asked merely, where the Samaritans were to worship. God was to be *Father* to the Samaritans only in the future, when the hour was come; for in the present, He did not stand in the relation of fatherhood towards them. This is shown by the immediately following verse, where all essential knowledge of God, and all relation to Him, is denied to the Samaritans. Among the Jews, the relation of fatherhood had been already entered into in the Old Testament dispensation, yet among them also it attained its perfection only under the New Covenant. A deeper vital connection with God was established first by the Spirit of Christ. Yet we need not doubt that the name of Father was already current among the Samaritans; for it is to be considered, not merely that even the heathen said to their idols, "Thou art my father," Jer. ii. 27, but it is much more important that in the Books of Moses the name of sons of God is ascribed to the descendants of Jacob, Ex. iv. 22; Deut. xiv. 1; so that the use of the name of Father among the Samaritans was an immediate result of their usurpation of the title of the posterity of Jacob.—The Old Testament basis for this declaration, as for that in Matt. viii. 11, is Mal. i. 11: "For from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, My name shall be great among the heathen; and in every place incense shall be offered unto My name, and a pure offering: for My name shall be great among the heathen, saith Jehovah Sabaoth." The words, *in every place*, form a contrast to the temple, mentioned in the previous verse. The prophet predicts that the appointment in Deut. xii. 5, 6—"Unto the place which the **LORD** your God shall choose out of all your tribes to place His name there, this His habitation shall ye seek, and thither come: and thither ye shall bring your burnt-offerings, and your meat-offerings," etc.—will lose its force in the future, on the advent of Christ. Michaelis: "In omni loco, in Assyria et *Ægypto*, Jes. xix. 18 sq., sicut olim in uno loco." In the passage of Isaiah here cited it is said, [Isa. xix. 19,] "In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt,"—the altar here, and the sacrifices in ver. 21, belong to each other, so that we cannot suppose that the altar has merely a symbolical meaning, as being a reference to the altar

in Jerusalem. Coincident with these declarations of Isaiah and Malachi is the prediction of the abolition of the Old Testament form of worship in Jer. iii. 16, Dan. ix. 27. This form involves the exclusiveness of the place of worship, so that this exclusiveness must cease so soon as the form of worship is abolished.—In direct contradiction to the declaration of the Lord here and in ver. 23, by which every distinction of locality is abolished under the New Covenant, are the theories at present in vogue, of the future restoration of Jerusalem to be the centre of the Church of God, and its central sanctuary. The extent of our declaration from this point of view was already fully recognised by Bengel: “Samaritæ non compulsi sunt Hierosolyma, Act. viii. 14. Et quid postea opus fuit Cruciatis? quid opus est peregrinationibus? Locorum hic discrimen plane tollitur, cui intenti fuerant veteres, Num. xxiii. 27. Si discrimen manet, ubivis potius, quam Hierosolymis adorandum esse, hæc verba innuunt.”

Ver. 22. “Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews.”—As regards the present, our Lord continues, the Jews are right, and not the Samaritans.—The object of worship is designated generally, but God alone is meant,—cf. Matt. iv. 10, γέγραπται γὰρ, κύριον τὸν Θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις, καὶ αὐτῷ μάνῳ λατρεύσεις,—*q. d.*, we worship a God whom we know. The Samaritans knew not God, because He had not made Himself known unto them; for every real knowledge of God has for its foundation, that God has revealed Himself, and has by His deeds made Himself a name. Because the Samaritans had not this revelation of God in their midst, they were in want of all essential knowledge of God; notwithstanding their “monotheism, free from anthropomorphisms and anthropopathisms,” they were not less than the heathen ἄθεοι ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ. Their eclectic position towards the word of God, in adopting only the Pentateuch and rejecting all the other books of the canon, and, “consequently, being without the Divine revelation contained in the later books, especially also the firm and living development of hope in the Messiah,” was only a consequence and result of their fundamental deficiency, in that they worshipped a God who had not made Himself known in their midst, and had never taken a form amongst them, and who had never filled out the void of their sanctuary and of their hearts by the

fulness of His presence. By this fundamental deficiency is explained also the fickleness of the Samaritans, their inability to suffer for their religion, and their inclination to all that savoured of innovation. “They did not tell the truth merely unconsciously, when they declared in their letter to Antiochus Epiphanes, in remarkable accordance with the declaration of our Lord, that their fathers founded ἀνώνυμον ἐν τῷ Γαριζεῖν ὅπει ἱερόν. The feeling was stirring within them, that the God about whom they troubled themselves so much, notwithstanding all their boasting of His nearness, was a God afar off, and not Θεὸς ἐναργῆς, ἐπιφανῆς, and that He had merely a traditional name, not one which had grown in a living manner out of the reality” (Beiträge 2, S. 21). Among the Jews, there was also much ignorance of God; but among them this was the fault of the individual. At all periods, even those of deepest degradation, there was among them a nucleus, a chosen few, who, on the ground of the Divine revelation, possessed an essential knowledge of God; while, on the other hand, among the Samaritans, the ignorance of God was one of first principles, radical and universal.—But why did not the true God make Himself known to the Samaritans? why were they condemned to worship they knew not what? The answer is: Because they did not seek access to the true God in the manner prescribed by Him. During the continuance of the Old Covenant, the kingdom of God was bound to the sanctuary in Jerusalem, and to fellowship with the Israelitish nation. Instead of causing themselves as individuals to be received by circumcision into the Church of God, they desired to be an independent division of the people of God, with equal rights to the Jews, and, as such, to take part in the erection of the temple at Jerusalem. When this pretension was rejected, they threw themselves in the face of the Divine appointment by the erection of their own sanctuary. By such practices they shut themselves out from God and His revelation.—The reproach, “Ye worship ye know not what,” now applies to the Jews not less than it then did to the Samaritans; for, since their rejection of Christ, God no longer knows them, and consequently they no longer know God. There is no Divine revelation in their midst, from which might be developed a true knowledge of God.—In this proposition is given at the same time the answer to the woman’s ques-

tion in ver. 20. If the Jews alone were in possession of true Divine knowledge, the place of their Divine worship must also be the correct one; and if the Samaritans, with respect to the knowledge of God, were groping altogether in darkness, they could not be right with respect to the place of His worship. The woman had inquired, primarily, only concerning the place; but in substance the question applied to the entire relation of the religion of the Samaritans to that of the Jews. On this account, Jesus refers in His answer to the whole, by which the part is governed.—“For salvation is of the Jews.” It is the Messianic salvation which is spoken of, and not the “Messianic idea,” which some commentators, in their embarrassment, have put in its place. The proof that not the Samaritans but only the Jews know God, is furnished by the fact that salvation proceeds from the Jews, by which the seal of confirmation is affixed to the Jewish religion; and it is shown that only among them does God rule, and that, therefore, only among them there is the true knowledge of God. If it is established that the Messianic salvation does not proceed from Jews and Samaritans together—to which the Lord has already referred in the *ἵμεῖς*, by which He, the bearer of this salvation, places Himself, together with the Jews, on the one hand, but the Samaritans on the other; cf. the words, *εἰξ ὁν ὁ Χριστὸς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα*, Rom. ix. 5—it is established at the same time, also, that the Samaritans are excluded from the kingdom of God, within which alone He is known. For the kingdom of God and salvation are inseparable.—That salvation is of the Jews, is testified by Old Testament prophecy from Gen. xii. onwards, according to which all nations of the earth should be blessed in the seed of Abraham. Cf. Gen. xl ix. 10, Isa. ii. and xl ix. 6—where God says to His servant (the true Israel, according to ver. 3), “I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth” (the expression points especially to this passage)—lx. 1–3, Micah iv., and many other passages. “Salvation is of the Jews:”—this is now represented bodily before the eyes of the woman in Christ, after whose advent Samaritanism must be regarded as an anachronism, and was afterwards acknowledged to be so by the Samaritans, when they said, *οὐδαμεν ὅτι οὐτός ἐστιν ἀληθῶς ὁ σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου, ὁ Χριστός*, by which they at the same time condemned

their whole previous religious character.—In like manner we might now say to the Jews, Ye worship, etc. For salvation is of the Christians, from the Zion of the Christian Church, Rom. xi. 26. The faith of Abraham, of David, and of Isaiah is not planted among the heathen by the Jews—who everywhere show themselves to be a dead tree and castaway branches, and no longer bear in themselves the signature of the living God, but of the idol mammon—but by the Christians, in prelude to the completion of salvation, which is to proceed, not from the synagogue, fast falling into ruins, but from the Church.—“Thus,” remarks Lampe, “the woman needed to be led over from her darkness before the true light broke in upon her, and to be humbled on account of her unworthiness, before the Redeemer of the world was made known to her.” It is evident that here also she has a representative character, and that the people of the Samaritans are represented to us in her.

Ver. 23. “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.”—*Spirit* forms the antithesis to all externalities—as, *e.g.*, this and that locality, or the merely outward sacrifice—and *truth* is the inseparable accompaniment of spirit, since only worship in spirit is true worship, all else is a lie and pretence.—All that man has of spirit, he has only by receiving his breath from God, Gen. ii. 7; and since, in consequence of the apostasy, he has sunk into carnality, Gen. vi. 3, he can by the effusion of the Spirit alone be raised into the domain of spirit. So long as the Spirit is not poured out, man remains incapable of rising into the region of spirit; and being in his natural condition, must necessarily draw down religion into the region of externality, in which alone he is at home.—The worship of God in spirit and in truth is, on the one hand, still future, for Christ is not yet glorified, and therefore the Holy Spirit is not yet come; but, on the other hand, it belongs already to the present time, for the Word has already appeared in the flesh, and the New Covenant is germinating even under the Old Covenant.—That God is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, is taught most emphatically even in the Old Testament. When Moses repeatedly designates it as the sum of all religion, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,” he thus transposes religion

into the sphere of spirit, refuses significance to everything external as such, and degrades it to an instrument, a mere form, which has no value, if not filled by the Spirit. When Isaiah, in chaps. i. and lxvi., so emphatically rejects the merely outward sacrifice, and other religious acts, as, *e.g.*, the mere prayer of the lips (xxix. 13), he has for his basis the proposition of our text. He desires spiritual virtues in opposition to merely external performances, which even on the threshold of revelation, in Gen. iv., are condemned by the rejection of the lifeless gift of Cain. Micah, in vi. 6–8, opposes to merely external offerings, as alone pleasing to God, to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. It is the central thought of Ps. 1., that God, being a *Spirit*, cannot be served with external offerings as such: ver. 13, “Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?” For the very reason that He is a Spirit, spiritual offerings can alone please Him, such as a heart full of gratitude and love: ver. 14, “Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High.” But though the end was so clearly perceived and set forth under the Old Covenant, yet still its attainment was very difficult; for under the Old Covenant the Spirit of Christ had not yet come, and the Spirit of God was not able to overcome in the great mass the degrading power of the flesh. In order to this, it needed to become, by an increase of potency, the Spirit of Christ. It was, indeed, difficult for one to maintain himself in the region of the Spirit, and it was very natural to sink down into the region of externality, where the flesh feels more at home and in its element. Still, it is of significance, that in the Divine law itself importance was ascribed to certain externalities during the continuance of the Old Covenant,—not, indeed, as though they had in themselves an atoning and justifying efficacy, but yet as being absolutely obligatory; *e.g.*, attendance at the sanctuary, and the offering of spiritual under the form of bodily sacrifices. By such a concession—which was made to the sensuous consciousness in order to bring it at least to the beginning of the worship of God in spirit and in truth—a false estimation of externals became very easy. We perceive this even in the lively polemics with which psalmists and prophets opposed this danger, *e.g.*, David in Ps. xv. and xxiv. To regard everything external as only a means to an end, and to estimate it from this

point of view, was, under the Old Covenant, in the power only of the elect few; and that it is still difficult at the present day, is shown, *e.g.*, by the dreams of a restoration of Jerusalem.

Ver. 24. "God is Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."—The most direct Old Testament parallel to "God is Spirit," is Isa. xxxi. 3, "The Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit." Here, to be God, and to be spirit (not *a* spirit, though the thought is not essentially altered by this translation), appear to be inseparably connected. Quesnel remarks: "A spirit and a heart which are consecrated to God by a living faith, a sincere worship and humiliation before His greatness, an absolute subjection to and dependence on His will, a lively gratitude for His goodness and His benefits, and a burning zeal for His honour: this is the sacrifice which is worthy (so far as a creature can be worthy) of this eternal and infinite Spirit, and this absolutely holy and immutable will, which is God Himself. Without this sacrifice of the spirit and the heart by love, the outward offering which should be its sign, the effect and copy of it, is an empty sign, a deceitful image, a Jewish sacrifice."—It scarcely needs remark, that the present declaration of Christ is directed against the externals of worship, only in so far as these lay claim to an independent significance. If we should extend it farther, we should not promote, but destroy the worship of God in spirit and in truth; for man, as a corporeal as well as spiritual being, needs the external to lead him to the spiritual, and the spiritual life must be stunted if this support be withdrawn. Yet from the declaration of our text we derive the rule, that all accumulation of externals in worship, which so easily overmaster instead of stimulating the spirit, are to be avoided.

Ver. 25. "The woman saith unto Him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when He is come, He will tell us all things."—The woman feels that she cannot follow, and that she can gain an insight into the whole depth of the truth just announced only in connection with a comprehensive enlightenment of her religious consciousness, which she expects from the advent of the Messiah. She accordingly expresses her desire; and in consequence of this longing after Him, Jesus makes Himself known as the Messiah. In i. 42 it is ὁ Μεστίας,

but here *Mεσσίας* without the article, because the word had become a proper name, as also διάβολος and Σατανᾶς stand sometimes without the article. The appellative character of the name would of course be less observed by a foreigner. It has been thought striking, that the Samaritan woman makes use of the specifically Jewish name, Messiah, which was taken from writings (Ps. ii. and Dan. ix.) which were not included in the Samaritan canon. But from the entire relation of the Samaritan theology to the Jewish, *viz.*, of absolute dependence (cf. Beiträge 2, S. 28 sq.), it can scarcely be presumed that the name so current at that time among the Jews, had not become so also among the Samaritans. It is also to be observed that the Jewish apostates, who formed a main channel by which much accrued to the Samaritans from the Jewish fulness, had their principal seat in Sychem. Cf. Josephus, Antiquities 11, 8, 6: Σαμαρεῖται μητρόπολιν τότε τὴν Σίκιμα ἔχοντες, κειμένην πρὸς τῷ Γαριζὲν ὄρει καὶ κατωκημένην ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστατῶν τοῦ Ἰουδαίων ἔθνους. And then it is to be observed, that the woman, in her need to cling to Christ, uses that name in preference, which, as she knew, was the current one among the Jews. Substantially, also, she does not go beyond the Pentateuch, for the coming of the Messiah is spoken of in Gen. xl ix. 10; cf. remarks on i. 9. The conception of the Messiah as a divinely enlightened Teacher points to Deut. xviii.; the same passage on which the Samaritans at the present day found their belief in a Redeemer (cf. Bargès, *Les Samaritains de Naplouse*, Paris 1855, p. 90), while they now refer the prophecy of Shiloh to Solomon (p. 91). The words ἀναγγελεῖ ἡμῖν πάντα strikingly accord with Deut. xviii. 18, "And He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him." To the prediction of Moses, of a Prophet *like unto him*, also refers, in all probability, the Samaritan secret name for the Messiah, הַשְׁבֵב or הַתָּבִב. We are not, with Gesenius (*Carmina Samarit.* p. 75 sq.), to render this name by *conversor*; for this interpretation rests on the false assumption, that שׁב in Hebrew often means *to lead back*. We must rather render, with De Sacy (*Notices et extraits*, t. 12, p. 29, 209, Juyneboll. *Chron. Samarit.* p. 52), celui qui revient, *the Returning One*. The form תָּבִב occurs also in the Samaritan as the participle of חָב (which in the Samaritan, Syriac, and Arabic always means *to return*), with

the meaning of *the returning*, or specifically, the penitent. On the ground of the words, *like unto me*, the Samaritans regarded the Messiah as the returning Moses. On this view, they say that his name will begin with the letter M (Bargès and elsewhere), and ascribe to him, who is to be but a man, an age of a hundred and twenty years (Jowett in Von Raumer, Pal. S. 145).

Ver. 26. “Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am He.”—This is the seventh and last word of Jesus. P. Anton : “ Since she herself thus spoke of it, it was now time that Christ should draw tight the knot.” Among the Jews, Jesus proceeded cautiously, repressing His Messianic dignity, Matt. xvi. 20 ; the reason for which, according to John vi. 15, was the political character of the Jewish hope in the Messiah. This reason did not exist among the Samaritans ; and if the transaction was a symbolical one, having a prophetic character, the confession of Jesus as the Messiah would necessarily occur in it. The necessary conclusion of the occurrence was the declaration, “ We know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world ;” and this confession must have been preceded by the declaration of Christ Himself concerning His Messianic dignity.

Ver. 27. “ And upon this came His disciples, and marvelled that He talked with the woman : yet no man said, What seekest Thou ? or, Why talkest Thou with her ?”—In Judea the disciples would not have marvelled that Jesus talked with a woman, but in Samaria, even if He talked with a man ; and still more did they marvel at His conversing with a Samaritan woman. But we should remark the timid awe of the disciples in relation to Christ. “ With which wonder,” remarks the Berleburger Bibel, “ there was yet a holy reverence, so that they did not judge Him in this conduct, or put a false construction upon it.” Calvin draws from this behaviour of the disciples the instruction, “ that we, when something in the works of God and of Christ does not please us, should not indulge in complaint and opposition, but should rather be modestly silent, until what is hidden from us be revealed from heaven.”

Ver. 28. “ The woman then left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, 29. Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did : is not this the Christ ?”—The *μήτι*, *perhaps* (Buttmann, S. 213), is probably not the ex-

pression of her own doubt, but of modesty, and of acknowledgment of her entirely subordinate position. She does not wish to anticipate the judgment of the men, and thus to evoke their contradiction.

Ver. 30. “Then they went out of the city, and came to Him.”—It is a contrast of prophetic significance, that the Jews by their plots drive Jesus out of their country, while, on the other hand, the Samaritans come out to Him and invite Him into their city. The willing audience which the woman’s message finds, presupposes that the Jewish expectation, founded on Dan. ix., of the directly impending advent of the Messiah, had passed over also to the Samaritans.

Ver. 31. “In the meanwhile His disciples prayed Him, saying, Master, eat.”—The preparation of the food which had been bought occupied some time, and it was not ready until the Samaritans were already near. This explains the answer of Christ. The disciples urged Him to eat first of all, before engaging with those who were now approaching,—a request, the impropriety of which is evident from the circumstance that the woman had, for the sake of Jesus, left her water-pot.

Ver. 32. “But He said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. 33. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought Him ought to eat?” They spoke only one to another, for to Jesus Himself they dared not, in their bashful reverence, address such a question.—Ver. 34. “Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.” “A spiritual pastor,” says Quesnel, “needs to have nothing at heart but the work of God and the salvation of souls. This is his delight, his food and his life.”—Ver. 35. “Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.” According to some, the words, “there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest,” are a proverbial expression, which has this meaning: four months are usually reckoned from the sowing of the seed to the harvest. But it is opposed to this, that there is no trace elsewhere of such a proverbial expression, that then we do not perceive why it should be attributed to the Apostles in particular; that then the time of sowing would have been mentioned; and that in Palestine there are between sow-

ing and harvest not four, but six months, the sowing beginning about the middle of October (Jahn, Archæology i. 153), and the harvest in the middle of April (i. 332). We have therefore more probably before us an expression which the disciples had then just used. Since there were yet four months to harvest, their journey must have occurred about the time when the seeds were just sprouting; and in view of this, the disciples had just before made such a remark, not as economists, but as theologians, in order to indicate how strongly it is enjoined on man to persevere and hope, and how very important it is for him to possess his soul in patience, and thus in the same sense in which James (v. 7) expresses himself: *ἰδοὺ δὲ γεωργὸς ἐκδέχεται τὸν τίμιον καρπὸν τῆς γῆς, μακροθυμῶν ἐπ’ αὐτῷ ἔως ἂν λάβῃ ὑετὸν πρώιμον καὶ ὄψιμον.* Now, in contrast to this slow ripening of the earthly fruits, Jesus here, according to some, speaks “of the quick succession of sowing and harvest in spiritual matters.” But Augustine has already designated the contrast more precisely: “*Vos quatuor menses computatis usque ad messem, ego vobis aliam messem albam et paratam ostendo.*” It is the whiteness of the fields to harvest which is here alone spoken of; for, according to what follows, the harvest itself was to be gathered by the Apostles not until after the ascension of Christ. The antithesis is then to be thus rendered: In spiritual things further progress has been made than in natural; for while in the latter the seed is just springing, in the spiritual it is already white unto harvest.—With the words, “Lift up your eyes, and look,” compare Isa. xl ix. 18, “Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee;” and likewise lx. 4. The coincidence is the less to be regarded as a chance one, since in the Old Testament passage it is also the increase of the kingdom of God which is spoken of. The words render it probable that Jesus pointed to the approaching Samaritans. As Lücke correctly remarks, “Without something present which the disciples could perceive, the requisition to lift up their eyes would be scarcely conceivable.” But we must not stop with the Samaritans, but rather behold in their appearance the symptom of a general state of the world. Then also the declaration of our Lord, in Matt. ix. 37, 38, is more closely connected. Vers. 36–38 are also of general contents.—The declaration of our

Lord here, is to show, primarily, that it is now time not to eat, but to do the work of the Father. But with this is connected the design, which is more prominent in what follows, to fill the disciples with courage and joy in their mission, which was entered on with such favourable prospects.—It is evident from this passage, that the visit of Jesus to Samaria occurred about the middle of December. The regular commencement of the harvest was the second day of the Passover, or the sixteenth day after the first new moon in April. From this time four months are to be reckoned backwards. Since Jesus went to Jerusalem to the Passover, His stay in Judea had been about eight months.

Ver. 36. “And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal ; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.”—It is true, Christ continues, that the fields are already white to harvest, but yet the harvest itself is not immediately at hand. To gather it in is not Mine, but your work,—a work rich in blessing for you, and in joy at the same time for Me, for whom the words of the Psalmist will then be fulfilled : Ps. cxxvi. 5, “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.” The distinction between the sower and reaper here intimates that the harvest will not begin until after Christ’s death ; and it is in harmony with this, that the Lord was satisfied with this single visit, that He never made another to continue the work thus begun, and that He expressly forbade His Apostles to journey in the country of the Samaritans with the object of preaching the Gospel there,—facts which show that here it was the design only to give a prefiguration or prelude of that which should take place after Christ’s exaltation.—The fruit which is gathered into eternal life is the reward of faithful labour, which is presented in eternal life. Cf. ὁ μισθός ἡμῶν πολὺς ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, Matt. v. 12. The *καρπός* here is the *μισθός* in the immediately preceding context, and the eternal life appears to be the place where the fruit, the reward, is hidden. Matt. iii. 12, vi. 26. Quesnel remarks : “The happiness of a worker is often closely connected with that of others ; in working for them, he works for himself.” It is a part of the reward specially appointed for the Apostles, that they shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Ver. 37. “And herein is the true saying, One soweth, and

another reapeth.”—Jesus had previously distinguished between the sower and the reaper, and here this distinction is proved, or represented more clearly and sharply. According to the parallel passage, 2 Pet. ii. 22, ἀληθινός is the adjective to λόγος, and the words, “herein is,” are equivalent to, herein is verified, or, here applies. The saying (the sense of which is thus correctly expressed by Calvin, “*Multos sæpe alieni laboris fructum percipere*”) is designated as true with respect to the present relations, in which it attains to its higher verity. The consideration that they reaped what Christ had sown, was to render the Apostles truly grateful, and very zealous in their harvest-work.

Ver. 38. “I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: others laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.”—On ἀπέστειλα Lampe remarks: “Your *mission* began with your calling, although it did not receive its completion until afterwards.” By “others” is meant Jesus alone; but He here represents a whole class, in exact analogy with Ps. liv. 4, “The Lord is with them that uphold my soul;” on which it is remarked in my Commentary [Translation, ii. 220], “The Psalmist makes two parties, the opponents and the helpers, and is full of triumphing confidence as he sees the Lord upon the side of the latter. That the Psalmist must have had other helpers besides the Lord, we must not conclude from the plural. The plurality is an ideal circumstance; the plural denotes the class, the party, which in reality might have been embodied in an individual.” Ps. cxviii. 7, “The Lord taketh my part with them that help me,” is also quite analogous. With κεκοπιάκασι, cf. κεκοπιάκως ἐκ τῆς ὁδοιπορίας, John iv. 6. This was only the emblem of the distress and suffering which Jesus had to endure until the completion of His ministry. How bitter this suffering was, is evident from the fact, that what the disciples had to do and to suffer until their martyr-death appears so light in comparison, that it is not worthy of being spoken of.

Ver. 39. “And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on Him for the saying of the woman, who testified, He told me all that ever I did. 40. So when the Samaritans were come unto Him, they besought Him that He would tarry with them: and He abode there two days. 41. And many more believed because of His own word; 42. And said unto the woman,

Now we believe, not because of thy saying : for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world (the Christ).”—The Messiah is represented as the Saviour of the world in that one of the few Messianic passages in the Pentateuch, to which the Samaritans were restricted, Gen. xl ix. 10, according to which the nations shall adhere to the Shiloh, the peaceful, the peace-bringer. The proof that this passage was interpreted of the Messiah by the Samaritans, is adduced in the Christology, Th. i. S. 75, 6 [Translation, i. p. 66]. Jesus must have presented Himself to the Samaritans as the “Saviour of the WORLD,” since He entirely rejected their pretensions to have a part in the covenant, and to belong to the natural Israel, and placed them in the same category as the heathen, ver. 22. If salvation was of the Jews only, they could partake of it only in so far as it was destined for the whole world. The expression, *σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου*, is found nowhere else in the New Testament, except only in 1 John iv. 14, where it is natural to suppose that John used it in allusion to our text. The Berleb. Bibel remarks, “Because they call Him thus, they must have learned the misery of the world.” ‘Ο Χριστός is wanting in important authorities.

## CHAP. IV. 43–54.

## THE SECOND MANIFESTATION OF THE GLORY OF CHRIST IN GALILEE.

Ver. 43. “Now, after two days He departed thence, and went into Galilee. 44. For Jesus Himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country. 45. Then, when He was come into Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things that He did at Jerusalem at the feast : for they also went unto the feast.”—*Kαὶ ἀπῆλθεν* is wanting in some important critical authorities, but the omission is probably to be explained from an attempt at abbreviation. The words *καὶ ἀπῆλθεν* take up ver. 3, and show that Jesus continued the journey which He is there said to have entered upon, but which was interrupted by His stay in Samaria. This word *ἀπῆλθεν* occurs more frequently in John than in any other New Testament author, and is also used with predilection in the Apocalypse.

There was less occasion to add it than to omit it. The circumstantial mode of designating the acts of Jesus, corresponds to the high significance which John ascribes to His person, as, for the same reason, Matthew (v. 2) adds, ἀνοιξας τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ.—Galilee, in ver. 43, is the rest of Galilee in distinction from Nazareth, and in opposition to it, as, in an entirely corresponding manner, John, in iii. 22, designates Judea as the land of Judea in opposition to Jerusalem. The Apostle could not certainly have so written if he had intended to give an absolutely independent account of the life of Jesus, instead of *paralipomena* to the three first Gospels, and especially to that of his fellow-Apostle Matthew. In what difficulties we become entangled if we do not acknowledge this fixed fact, is clearly evident from the helpless embarrassment into which most modern interpreters have fallen with reference to this passage. Nazareth, according to John also, is the home of Jesus, i. 47, xix. 19, and therefore the place to which He had gone first on His return to Galilee. But after Matthew, in iv. 13, had recorded καὶ καταλιπὼν τὴν Ναζαρὲτ, ἐλθὼν κατώκησεν εἰς Καπερναούμ, John could, without danger of being misunderstood, use Galilee of the rest of Galilee, and πατρίς of Christ's home,—the latter the rather, since Matt. xiii. 57, cf. Mark vi. 4, Luke iv. 24, served as a commentary to the words, ὅτι προφήτης ἐν τῇ ἴδῃ πατρίδι τιμὴν οὐκ ἔχει, and showed that πατρίς here stands of Nazareth, the adopted city of Christ, and not of His native country.—Even the circumstance that John speaks so generally of Galilee, without more precisely designating any place where Jesus established Himself, and also without mentioning any such in the following context—for the stay at Cana is manifestly only a transient one—is equivalent to a reference to his predecessor. Capernaum had been mentioned in Matt. iv. 13 as the place where Jesus resided, with which John harmonizes, in stating that Jesus had already, on His journey to the first Passover, stayed several days at Capernaum, the residence of several of His disciples, ii. 12, and that in Capernaum dwelt the royal (servant), whose son Jesus had healed immediately on His first arrival in Galilee. It is quite natural to suppose that this person, who believed with his whole house, ver. 53, made every effort to induce Jesus to take up His abode there.—If we have first gained a firm basis from comparison with the first Evan-

gelists, the sense thus obtained is confirmed by a more particular consideration of the narrative of John; where even the declaration of Jesus in itself requires the reference to His adopted city, and not His native country. It is probable that He points back to an Old Testament fact—for the canon of the Old Testament is the peculiar province of the prophets, prophecy being extinct in the post-canonical period,—and no other can be thought of than this, that Jeremiah, on his visit to his native city Anathoth, received the direction, “Prophesy not in the name of the **LORD**, that thou die not by our hand,” Jer. xi. 21. On the basis of this passage Jesus formed the expression Himself; for there is no ground for supposing that it was a proverb current among the Jews. Further, if by *πατρὶς* we understand *native country*, the sentence is not true, either in general—all the prophets before the exile prophesied in their native land, and did not pass beyond its boundaries—or in its application to Christ. In this we should necessarily understand the native country to be Galilee. But it was precisely here, where the Pharisees could not act freely, that Christ found most entrance, as is shown directly by ver. 45. The rulers of the people say to Nicodemus in vii. 52, when he takes the part of Christ, “Art thou also of Galilee?”—According to Matt. xiii. 57, Jesus spoke the words, *οὐκ ἔστι προφήτης ἄτιμος, εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ*, when He was ill received on His visit to Nazareth; but this visit belongs to a much later period. An entire series of events lie between the return of Jesus to Galilee, iv. 12, and this visit. In Luke iv. 23, the Nazarenes say to Jesus: *ὅσα ἡκούσαμεν γενόμενα εἰς Καπερναοὺμ, ποίησον καὶ ὥδε ἐν τῇ πατρίδι σου.* Jesus had therefore already performed a number of miracles in Galilee. Here, on the other hand, the Galileans receive Jesus on the ground of that which He had done in Jerusalem; and according to ver. 54, the healing of the son of the royal servant was the second miracle only which had been performed in Galilee. That which Jesus had already declared here, in order to give a reason for His resolution not to take up His abode in Galilee, He repeated when the declaration received an actual confirmation on a visit which He made to Nazareth, for the very reason that it might come to the light, and that He might not, from a pre-conceived opinion, withhold from His home the blessing which

was primarily due to it. It was certainly not without an object that Jesus did not put it to the proof immediately, but only at a time when His fame was already extended far and wide in Galilee, Luke iv. 14. Salvation was to be offered to His native town under the most favourable circumstances.—Lampe is of opinion, that it is not here said when Jesus made this declaration; for the Evangelist might properly have stated the ground of the resolution of Jesus in words which He spoke on another occasion, even on His later visit to Nazareth. This is of course possible; but yet it is natural that Jesus should thus directly justify Himself to His disciples, on account of His resolution not to take up His abode in Nazareth, and that He should repeat this declaration when it had been confirmed by the result.—We perceive the reason why Jesus had no honour in His own city in Matt. xiii. 54–56. They had in view the inferior circumstances from which He had sprung, and were unable to rise to the recognition of a greatness which must be derived so absolutely from heaven, and which in their view lacked all earthly foundation.

Ver. 46. “So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine.” These latter words contain the reason why Jesus turned first of all to Cana. It was the place in Galilee where, in consequence of the previous manifestation of His glory, He had already a point of support. That He went thither first, pointed to the fact, that a similar manifestation was to be expected from Him in the future,—a reference which was understood by the royal servant.—“And there was a certain royal [servant], whose son was sick at Capernaum.” Josephus, in his Jewish War, B. 7, ch. 5, § 2, calls the servant of the Parthian king sent to Titus, *royal*; and so likewise in his Antiquities, B. 15, ch. 8, 9, 4, he styles the servants of King Herod, whom he had shortly before called *ὑπηρέτας*. The sons of Herod were only tetrarchs; but that in common life they were frequently honoured with the royal title, is evident from Matt. xiv. 9, Mark vi. 14. The name of this royal person, who according to ver. 53 believed, with all his house, is by some derived from Luke viii. 3, where, among the women who followed Jesus and ministered unto Him of their substance, is mentioned Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward. We should be referred more decidedly to this passage, if there did

not occur in Acts xiii. 1, among the prophets and teachers in Antioch, one *Mavaṇu*, Ἡρώδου τοῦ τετράρχου σύντροφος. The royal servant had without doubt heard, besides the miracle in Cana, of all that Jesus had done in Jerusalem, ver. 45. Probably sick persons had already been healed there by Jesus.—The difference of the royal servant here, and the centurion in Matt. viii. and Luke vii., is quite evident. There is an accordance only in the most general feature, that the request for a sick dependent is granted, and that this sick person is in Capernaum—according to Matthew the customary residence of Christ, and therefore the principal scene of His miracles, Luke iv. 23. All else is different: the place where Jesus is addressed is there Capernaum, but here Cana; the time is here the first commencement of Jesus' Messianic ministry in Galilee, there, after Jesus had already laboured for some time in Galilee; the relation of the sick person for whom the request is made—there a servant, here a son; the religion—the centurion is a heathen, the royal servant, as is especially shown by ver. 48, a Jew; and the degree of faith—in the centurion it is a rare energy of faith, while on the other hand the royal servant is censured on account of the weakness of his faith.

Ver. 47. “When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto Him, and besought Him that He would come down and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. 48. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.”—The added *τέρατα* gives a more exact definition of the signs, and shows that it is *miraculous* signs that are meant. Signs and wonders were altogether necessary, and the appearance of Jesus cannot be thought of without them. Jesus Himself points the doubting Baptist to them in Matt. xi. 4, 5. He says, in ch. x. 37 of our Gospel, “If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not;” and in xv. 24, “If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin.” Among the Samaritans also, Jesus had proved His divinity in this manner. The argument which the woman brings forward for His Messianic dignity is this, “He told me all things that ever I did.” In this case, however, the signs and wonders were already before Him, and thus it brought a reproach on the royal servant, that he had not been led to faith by them, but that his heart still re-

mained cold ; for it was the signs and wonders which occasioned his coming to Jesus, especially the miracle performed at Cana. But although Christ blames the royal servant, as He does Thomas in xx. 29, yet there is in the background the granting of the request ; and the answer is essentially different from that to the Pharisees who desired a sign of Him, *πειράζοντες*, Matt. xvi. 1.

Ver. 49. "The royal [servant] saith unto Him, Sir, come down ere my child die. 50. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way."—*To live* occurs repeatedly in the Old Testament of recovery from severe disease, because this is, as it were, the beginning of death : Isa. xxxviii. 1 ; 2 Kings i. 2. Quesnel : "Remark the double miracle, which Jesus here performs by a single word : one on the distant body of the son, the other on the present heart of the father, who is himself healed of his unbelief, since he believed in the healing, which he did not see.—The efficacy of the word of Jesus even in His absence, taught His disciples that His return to heaven need not injure their confidence in His aid."

Ver. 51. "And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy child liveth. 52. Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." The servants say *yesterday*, according to the Jewish division of the day, according to which the day ends at sunset, and the healing had taken place about one o'clock in the afternoon. Since the distance between Capernaum and Cana, the present Kefr Kenna, is about twenty-five miles, the royal servant could conveniently be in Capernaum on the evening of the same day according to our reckoning.—Ver. 53. "So the father knew that it was at the same hour (the fever left him) in the which Jesus had said unto him, Thy son liveth : and himself believed, and his whole house." His former faith had reference to a single point, the healing of his son ; but now he becomes a partaker of the general, saving, Christian faith.—Ver. 54. "This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when He was come out of Judea into Galilee." The word *πάλιν*, which is not absolutely necessary here, is a special favourite with John :—it occurs between forty and fifty times in his Gospel, while in the

Gospel of Luke it is found only twice. In the Epistles of John it occurs only once, and in the Apocalypse only twice, which circumstance is characteristic in respect of the historical style. The words ἐλθών, etc., can refer to the second miracle only; for at the first Jesus came not from Judea, but from Peræa. We are therefore to understand, with the preceding statement, the words *in this scene*, or *in Galilee*; for that it cannot be the second miracle of all which is spoken of, is shown by ver. 45. The conclusion of the second group points back to the conclusion of the first, ii. 11. Bengel calls attention to the fact, that John gives a particular account of three miracles in Galilee—the two at Cana, and the feeding of the five thousand in ch. vi.; and likewise of three in Judea—the healing of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, ch. v., of the blind man in ch. ix., and the raising of Lazarus. He likewise records three appearances of the risen Lord, with an express designation of the last as the third, xxi. 14; as, indeed, we are instructed by our text to mark the number. As John demonstrably elsewhere ascribes significance to numbers, we need not regard this as a mere chance.—Schweiger remarks: “What becomes of Jesus, or where He stays, no one can tell from this narrative—John does not usually relate so inconsiderately.” From this it is seen that John refers to former accounts, from which what is wanting here must be taken. The representation becomes an enigma if we do not recognise this. And then also it does not seem strange that the disciples are so much in the background, not being mentioned again till vi. 3. That Jesus was accompanied by them at this time, we are sufficiently informed in the first Gospels.

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### THE THIRD GROUP, CHAP. V. 1—VI. 71,

Contains the second journey of Jesus to the feast at Jerusalem, and whatever John wishes to record of what occurred between it and the third journey, in supplementing the three first Gospels.

When Jesus had the conversation with the woman of Samaria there were yet four months to harvest, therefore to the Passover, which, according to v. 1, Jesus keeps in Jerusalem. The healing of the son of the royal servant followed soon after

His arrival in Galilee. There is thus left a period of from three to four months, which must be filled up from the three first Gospels. Important events must have occurred during this time, the rather, since the imprisonment of the Baptist required Jesus to occupy his vacant place.

Chap. v. ver. 1. "After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem."—Lücke remarks, "Whenever John wishes to designate the immediate succession of time, he uses *μετὰ τοῦτο*; but when the more remote succession, *μετὰ ταῦτα*." One will, however, be disposed *a priori* to mistrust so minute a distinction; and this mistrust is shown, on closer investigation, to be well founded; for the distinction is wrecked directly on ver. 14, where, according to the theory of Lücke, we should expect *τοῦτο*, since the relation of *one* fact only has preceded. *Μετὰ ταῦτα*, which is always used in the Apocalypse, is also the regular phrase in the Gospel, where *μετὰ τοῦτο* occurs by way of variation, but only four times altogether. *Μετὰ ταῦτα* is found nowhere else so frequently as in the Gospel and in the Apocalypse. Matthew has neither *μετὰ ταῦτα* nor *τοῦτο*, and Mark only once *μετὰ ταῦτα*. It is a matter of controversy even to the present day, what is to be understood by the "feast of the Jews." We must at once reject the opinion, that John himself does not designate any particular feast. It is opposed to this, that all the other feasts in John are distinct feasts; that the feasts govern his grouping of the narrative, as especially here the feast forms the beginning of the third group; and that the mention of the feasts in John has a chronological significance, so that he mentions the Passover even when Christ did not attend it. If now it is established that John means a particular feast, it is further evident, from the fact that Jesus went to Jerusalem to this feast, that only one of three great feasts can be thought of. For the celebration of these feasts only was connected with the temple; and from the object which Jesus had in His attendance, to exert an influence upon the people assembling to the feast—cf. remarks on ii. 13—His going up presupposes that of the people. Further, the words *τῶν Ἰουδαίων*, having reference to Lev. xxiii. 2, are never used by John of any other than the three great festivals ordained in the Law,—twice of the Passover, once of the Feast

of Tabernacles. The very fact, however, of the attendance of Jesus is especially in favour of the Passover; for, according to the practice of the Jews at that time, the Passover was the only one of the three chief feasts which was regularly kept by the whole people at the temple.<sup>1</sup> We are led to the Passover also by the passage, iv. 35, according to which, when Jesus went to Samaria, there were yet four months to the harvest, which began with the Passover, which was therefore, at that time, the next of three chief feasts. But the main argument in favour of the Passover we give in the words in which it has been previously presented in the Christology.<sup>1</sup> “The dispute is decided at once in favour of the Passover, if the article is to be regarded as genuine. That there are good authorities in favour of this conclusion, is evident from the fact, that *Tischendorf* has restored it to the text.<sup>2</sup>—The omission of the article might very easily have originated with those who did not know what to make of it. *The feast must either be the feast par excellence, or the feast mentioned before.* In the former case, it must be the Passover, which was shown to be the one fundamental feast of the nation by the fact that it was instituted before any of the others, before the Sabbath itself, and even before the conclusion of the covenant on Sinai, of which it lay at the foundation (for proofs of the superior worth attached to the Passover, see *Lund*, jüd. *Heilighümer*, p. 974). And in the latter case, we are still brought to the feast of the Passover, as being the only festival mentioned before. Not only is it noticed at the commencement of the second group, which answers to that of the third, and comes very near to it, in spite of the distance between the two, in consequence of the striking similarity of the words employed (chap. ii. 13, ‘And the Passover of the Jews was at hand; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem;’ chap. v. 1, ‘After this was the feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem’); but it also occurs a very short time before, in chap. iv. 45, ‘Then, when He was come into Galilee, the

<sup>1</sup> Th. 3, 1, S. 184 f. [Translation, iii. p. 244]. We can here only refer the reader to the detailed refutation there given of the hypothesis, that by the feast is to be understood the feast of Purim.

<sup>2</sup> It is of no slight importance, that the newly discovered *Codex Sinaiticus* also—according to *Tischendorf*, the oldest extant—has the article. Cf. *Tischendorf's Notitia editionis Codicis Bibliorum Sinaitici*, p. 18.

Galileans received Him, having seen all the things which He did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.'—But, even if the article is not genuine, we can only refer it to the Passover. For, as it is *a priori* impossible that there should be any uncertainty as to what feast it was, we must complete the passage ('there was feast (not even *a* feast) of the Jews') from the context. According to *Winer*, the definite article may be omitted 'when the omission does not introduce any ambiguity into the discourse, or leave the reader in any uncertainty whether he is to understand the word definitely or indefinitely.' This is the case here. Every unbiassed reader thinks at once of the Passover. The decision of this point rests upon what goes before, especially as the expression, 'and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,' precludes the possibility of any other being intended than one of the three leading festivals; and among these it is most natural to fix upon the Passover, inasmuch as this was the only one at which it was a universal custom to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The words, *καθ' ἑορτήν*, in Matt. xxvii. 15 and Mark xv. 6, are perfectly analogous; so perfectly so, that every other analogy is rendered superfluous in consequence. On the latter passage, *Fritzsche* observes: 'quamquam *ἡ ἑορτή* de quibusvis feriis in genere dicitur, tamen h. l. *quum de Paschate agatur* (Marc. xiv. 1) *καθ' ἑορτήν* ad Paschatis feriis referri debet: singulis Paschatis feriis;' and *Lücke* (on John ii. p. 8) says: 'The formula *κατὰ δὲ ἑορτὴν* is certainly used to denote the Passover, *but only in connection with the history of the Passion*. In itself, it leaves the feast undetermined.' The applicability of these words to the passage before us is at once apparent."—Another important argument in favour of the Passover is derived from the parable in Luke xiii. 6 sqq. At the time when Jesus related this parable, three years—this is a round number, but at least two years and a half—of His ministry had already passed. According to ver. 8, the fig-tree was to receive a respite for another year. From this we obtain, in all, at least three years and a half, answering to the four Passovers of John, if a Passover be recognised in our text. Three Passovers besides this are expressly mentioned by John, ii. 13, vi. 4, and then the last. Finally, it is also of importance, that Irenæus, the oldest among the teachers of the ancient Church, whose view of our text is

well known, refers it decidedly to the Passover. He proves, in ii. 39 (Bened. 22), that four Passovers fall into the period of the Messianic work of Christ. The first in ii. 13: “Dehinc iterum subtrahens se invenitur in Samaria, quando et cum Samaritana disputabat et filium centurionis absens verbo caravit. Et post hæc iterum secunda vice ascendit in diem festum Paschæ in Hierusalem, quando paralyticum, qui juxta natatoriam jacebat 38 annos, curavit, jubens ut surgeret et auferret grabbatum suum et iret.”

These are the important grounds in favour of the Passover, against which the following argument has been principally urged:—“Jesus spoke iv. 35 in December: from vi. 4, however, it is evident that the Passover was still impending; consequently, a feast must be meant occurring in the period between December and the Passover, and this is no other than the feast of Purim.” But nothing even that is plausible can be objected to the view, that the Passover *here* is the second of the public ministry of Jesus; and that in vi. 4 the third. That then John passes over in silence a period of almost a year of the ministry of Jesus, proves nothing; for the opposition which Jesus had encountered in chap. v., and the plots directed against His life, cf. vers. 16, 18, must have caused Him to hurry away from Judea. The occurrences in Galilee had been anticipated by the three first Evangelists, whose omissions it is everywhere John’s object to supply, and who had confined themselves to these occurrences. Cf. Christol. S. 184. The omission can appear strange to those only who do not correctly understand the relation of John to the three first Gospels.

Ver. 2. “Now there is in Jerusalem, by the sheep-gate, a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.”—The *ἦστι* need not be explained by supposing that the pool still remained after the destruction of Jerusalem. For it is not the pool in itself which is regarded, but the pool in its property as a sanitary institution, with its five porches. We also need not, with Bengel and others, conclude from the *ἦστι* the composition of the Gospel before the destruction of Jerusalem, to which there are such strong opposing arguments. The Present tense may very well be such an one of presentation, as occurs so frequently in the Gospel of John, i. 44 sq., iv. 7—in general, certainly, of actions; and that the *ἦστι* is to be thus

rendered, is shown by the following *κατέβαινεν*. The descent of the angel coincides with the property of the pool as Bethesda. That with *προβατικῆ* is to be supplied *πύλη* (although no other example can be adduced of such an omission), is evident from Neh. iii. 1. The nearest gate to the sheep-gate was, according to Neh. iii. 3, xii. 39, the fish-gate; so that these gates probably received their names from the sheep-market and the fish-market, which were before them. The sheep-gate was particularly adapted to be the place of the sheep-market, because it was near the temple; and its locality is determined by the circumstance, that, according to Neh. iii. 1, on the restoration of the walls and gates, it was built by the priests. The high priest, together with the priests, commenced the building for a pattern to the rest, and there can be no doubt that they built the part nearest to the temple. It was also natural that the building should commence here. "A porta gregis," remarks *Raschi*, "inchoatur ædificatio murorum atque ibi etiam finitur." Cf. ver. 32, according to which the last division of workers built the portion up to the sheep-gate. Further, on the dedication of the walls, the company of the priests went directly from the sheep-gate into the temple, Neh. xii. 39, 40. For the "prison-gate" belonged to the temple itself, corresponding to the golden gate, built up at the present day, leading to the mosque Sakhara (Von Raumer, S. 308). We are led to the same position for the gate by the statement in Neh. iii. 1, that the tower Hananeel was in its vicinity; and that this tower was on the eastern side of the city, was proved in the Christology, in reference to Zech. xiv. 10. The exact determination of the position of the sheep-gate, and thus of the pool of Bethesda, is of importance, in that there are in the same locality at the present day remarkable analogies to the pool of Bethesda. On the eastern side of the city there are still the medicinal baths of Hammam es Shefat or Ain es Shefa, concerning which Walcott and Tobler have shown, that they are fed from the large and deep reservoir under the rock of the mosque, which occupies the site of the ancient temple. Ritter, 16, 1, S. 387, 417. On the eastern side of the city, "on the eastern slope of the southern part of Moriah," is also situated the fountain of Mary, which in its changes affords so striking a coincidence to the waters of the pool of Bethesda. "The fountain of the Virgin," says Ritter, S. 454, 5, "is sometimes quite

dry, and then suddenly gushes up again between the stones. An Arab told us, that the water comes from the spring under the great mosque.—T. Tobler had already, in the winter months of 1815, frequently visited the same fountain early in the morning and late in the evening, in order to make more exact observations as to their intermittent appearances.—He also, like Robinson, remarked the change of the water, which was usually two inches height of flood and ebb. But on the 21st January he remarked, what he had not seen before, a considerable gushing up of the water, which rose four and a half inches, and was connected with a gentle billowy motion. On the 14th March this bubbling up continued more than twenty minutes, till it attained its greatest height, when it gradually in two hours' time resumed its original elevation: it rose at this time as much as six and a half inches, and on sinking back, presented a surface of mirror-like smoothness. The greatest altitude was remarked about three o'clock in the afternoon.” G. O. Schulz (Jerusalem, S. 89) mentions the popular legend, which is still among the Mohammedans connected with the intermittent fountain of the Virgin, that a hidden dragon produces its rising and falling.

—*Ἐπιλεγομένη* denotes an additional name. The fundamental signification, *verba verbis adjicio*, indicates that the pool had another, so to speak, natural name. The sacred name, here alone mentioned, which has not in vain seven letters, divided as usual into three and four, is, without doubt, the Aramaic **בֵּית חֶסְדָּא**, *house or place of grace* (*Eβραιστὶ* refers to the language of the country at that time, the Aramaic, which was spoken by the Hebrews after their return from the exile). The insufficiently attested reading *λεγομένη* is opposed even by the character of the name, which has less that of a proper name than of an additional name. The genesis of the false reading is explained by supposing that those who made it did not perceive that here it is an added name which is spoken of, but allowed themselves to be led by the reasons which *Lücke* adduces in favour of the false reading. “According to the usage of John, *λεγομένη* merits the preference. The other reading is an *ἀπ.* *λεγ.* in John, and in this meaning never occurs in the New Testament;” on which it may be remarked, that the corresponding *ἐπικαλέομαι* does so occur.—In what sense did the pool receive the name of Bethesda? Olshausen thinks that

“ probably this building was an institution formed by charitable persons, and hence the name Bethesda.” But it was not the building that was thus called, but the pool with the building, which is represented as only a secondary consideration. There is nothing in the narrative about human love, but the contrary in ver. 7; and on the other hand, if we refer the name to the Divine love, Bethesda, *q.d.*, *place of grace*, we have the explanation directly in ver. 4. It would, moreover, be very wrong to draw from the *Bηθ* a proof that the name refers primarily to the building: בֵּית occurs of all places (*Gesenius*, in the *Thesaurus*, No. 7), and especially in local names; as *e.g.* Bethaven, *place of wickedness*; Bethabara, *place of transit*.

Ver. 3. “In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. 4. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first, after the troubling of the water, stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.”—The enumeration in ver. 3 is completed in the number four. This, the mark of extension, occurs frequently in such enumerations in the Scriptures; as, *e.g.*, in Gen. xxiv. 35, Matt. xv. 31. The *withered* are doubtless identical with the elsewhere so-called paralyties, who were such as suffered from palsy: cf. Matt. xii. 10, Luke vi. 6. They are probably mentioned last, because the sick man, who is subsequently spoken of, was one of them. The sick waited for the *moving* of the water. Tholuck remarks: “There is a gaseous spring of this kind in Kissingen, for example, which, after a rushing sound, about the same time every day, commences to bubble, and is most efficacious at the very time the gas is making its escape.” The affinity of the water with our mineral spring is intimated by a notice of Eusebius in his *Onomasticon* (Ed. Clericus, Amsterdam 1707, p. 41), that one of the two pools which were shown at his time as those of Bethesda had a singularly red water, παραδόξως πεφοινυγμένον δείκνυσι τὸ ὕδωρ. Jerome: “mirum in modum rubens.” With respect to the angel, Ols hausen guards against “the current view, according to which the natural production of the phenomenon in the fountain by the powers of nature, is absolutely opposed to the supernatural production through the medium of an angel. But by tracing the phenomenon to an angel, the existence and co-operation of natu-

ral forces is not denied, but these forces are rather apprehended in their higher causality." John would have recognised the angel in the bubbling at Carlsbad, not less than in the pool of Bethesda. "Circa balnea," says Bengel, "frequens θεῖον, aliiquid divinæ opis est." This is a mode of viewing natural relations which has become foreign to an age which, in its fundamental atheistic tendency, has constantly directed its gaze to the *causas secundas*, to which apply the words spoken by Paul of the heathen, ἐλάτρευσαν τῇ κτίσει παρὰ τὸν κτίσαντα, and whose regard remains fixed on that "monstrum ingens cui lumen ademtum," a Cosmos without God, a soulless nature. That the mode of consideration is that of the whole sacred Scriptures cannot be doubted, if we cast a glance at Matt. vi., according to which, God feeds the fowls of the air, and clothes the lilies; and at Ps. xxix., which portrays the greatness of God in the tempest; at Ps. civ., which sings the praise of God in His works, which He has ordered with so much wisdom, that all His creatures are cared for, and which speaks of the cedar of Lebanon, which the Lord has planted; and at Ps. cxlvii., where dragons and all floods, fire and hail, snow and vapour, storm-wind, fulfilling His word, mountains and all hills, fruit-trees and all cedars, are required to praise the Lord, who has glorified Himself in them. That here the Divine influence comes through the medium of an angel, makes no difference; for, according to the Scripture view, as far as the Divine operation extends, so far also extends the service of the angels, to whose department, according to Ps. civ. 4, and Heb. i. 7, belong also wind and flaming fire.—The phrase, *κατὰ καιρόν*, indicates that a higher law ruled in this matter. Phavorinus explains it by, *κατὰ τὸν εὖκαιρον καὶ προσήκοντα καιρὸν καὶ χρόνον*. Thus *κατὰ καιρόν* occurs in the meaning of, *at the appointed time*, in Rom. v. 6 (cf. *Philippi*); and further in Isa. lx. 22, *κατὰ καιρὸν συνάξω αὐτούς*, suo vel opportuno tempore congregabo illos; Job xxxix. 18, *κατὰ καιρὸν ἐν ὑψει ὑψώσει*, Vulg.: cum tempus fuerit in altum alas erigit.—It is said that the angel went down into the pool, because he showed himself to be active there (Winer, S. 367).—When it is said that he who first stepped in after the troubling of the water was made whole of whatsoever disease he had, this is to be understood with the limitation which is afforded by the nature of the case. Remarks like that of Lampe—"effectu

nunquam fallente, quale quid nunquam in aquis medicatis observatum est"—are wholly foreign to the matter. On the contrary, the rule for the understanding of it is furnished by that, which, according to the testimony of experience, can generally be accomplished by a medicinal spring. It is only of such that the author intends to give an account: miracles belong everywhere in the Gospels only to Christ and His Apostles. The thought is this only, that the water had most healing virtue when it was in motion, and that remarkable cases had occurred of the cure of all kinds of diseases. A water which heals under all circumstances, could not be found in the Scriptures; for it would contradict the very idea of God Himself. A water which heals even without God, and indeed in opposition to God, is nothing else but an idol. Such water would also afford a contradiction to the declaration of the Lord in ver. 14, which places all diseases in relation to sin. If all diseases are punishment, there can be no absolute means of cure. That which has arisen in an ethical way, cannot be removed in a purely physical way. The limiting view is further required by the importance which the Apostle ascribes to the miraculous healings performed by Christ. If we press the literal statement, the fountain accomplished far more than Christ, who, according to xv. 24, did that which no other had done, and whose opening the eyes of the blind in ix. 32 is represented as without example. How necessary it is to understand the popular mode of representing the Scripture *cum grano salis*, and always to apply the rule which is furnished by the nature of the case—a rule which may be so easily lost in learned microscopic investigation, while the simple reader easily finds it—is shown, e.g., by the history of the plagues of Egypt. According to Ex. ix. 6, all the cattle of the Egyptians die, and yet the immediately following plague, in ver. 9, smites beasts as well as men; as likewise the next plague of hail, which also, according to ver. 25, breaks all the trees of the field. He who, in his exposition, does not forget how it generally happens in case of damage by hail, will not deem it a contradiction, when in the following plague, x. 5, the locusts devour every green tree of the field.—P. Anton says: "It is the description of this house, and it is the description of the state of the Church here upon earth." It is specifically the description of its condition under the economy of the Old Covenant, under

which there was much disease, and the healing power was insufficient, so that Jesus had to interpose in order to remedy the deficiency. In the sick man who could not obtain healing at the pool of Bethesda, is an emblem of the people of the Old Covenant; and Jesus, by healing him, presents Himself to His Church as the true Bethesda, as He afterwards in chap. ix. makes Himself known as the true pool of Siloam. The number of the porches at the pool of Bethesda being five, is perhaps not without significance, or allows at all events of a suitable application. Five, a divided ten, is in the Scriptures a sign of incompleteness, of halfness, imperfection, and need of supplementation: cf. on Rev. ix. 9.—The words from ἐκδεχομένων to κατείχετο νοσήματι are declared to be spurious by the majority of recent commentators. That inclination has exercised considerable influence on this decision, is evident from the single fact, that *Lachmann*, who regards only the external authorities, has adopted it in his text. Tertullian (*de baptismo*, c. 5) read the whole passage; and that the omission in several critical helps rests only on internal evidence the same which has disinclined so many recently to the passage, is proved even by the one fact, brought forward by De Wette: “Alexandrine authorities only omit the passage entirely.” That the Alexandrine criticism had gained a bad report even in profane antiquity on account of its audaciousness, is shown by the proofs which *Wolf* has given in his *Prolegomena in Homerum*. It also lessens much the importance of the testimonies against the genuineness, that those from whom they proceed cannot at all agree in them. They are manifestly at one only in their object to remove something that is inconvenient, but as to the means they are quite at variance. Some leave out all from ἐκδεχομένων to the end, others only ver. 4. Others again mark this verse with an asterisk as a sign of addition, or with an obelus as a sign of spuriousness; and these are the critical signs which acquired a bad reputation even in matters of profane criticism. Even in MSS. which do not venture to render suspicious or omit the passage as a whole, there are many variations in the details. The assertion, that there is no ground of supposing the omission, is manifestly false. According to the rendering most natural to an unpractised expositor, the passage truly affords sufficient ground for its omission. If the appearance of the angel is taken to be a bodily one, and the

literal statement is so pressed as to signify that for the first who went down into the water the pool proved itself to be an infallible means of cure, the temptation must have been very great, in the times of a still plastic theology, to meddle with words which must have been highly offensive to the Greek character, so thoroughly penetrated with the spirit of illumination. There are numerous analogies to such an attack, on dogmatic grounds, on the genuineness of Scripture. The Greek mind threw it overboard because it could not reconcile itself to its imperfect comprehension. And because some could not understand the angel of the waters in Rev. xvi. 5, they omitted the words, *of the waters*. For the same reason they set aside the speaking altar in ver. 7, and the speaking eagle in Rev. viii. 13. Luke xxii. 43, 44 was omitted on dogmatic grounds, and likewise *νεκροὺς ἐγέλπετε* in Matt. x. 8. It is of paramount importance, however, that the words are necessarily required by the connection. The name Bethesda, *place of grace*, requires an explanation in what follows,—the rather, since the Apostle has expressly declared it to be a merely additional name. Bengel's position, “versus 7 hanc periocham aperte præsupponit,” must be acknowledged to be correct on every unbiassed consideration. The words *ὅταν ταραχθῇ τὸ ὕδωρ* there, refer back to *ἐτάρασσε τὸ ὕδωρ* here, and *ἐν φύσει ἔρχομαι ἐγώ* to *ὁ οὖν πρῶτος ἐμβάσις, κ.τ.λ.* Against the assertion, that all that is necessary to know may easily be concluded from the seventh verse, it has been already urged by Von Hofmann, that it is in a high degree improbable “that the narrator, who has stated the site of the pool and the number of the porches, should be so sparing of his words precisely with regard to that which it is necessary to know in order to understand the occurrence, and should leave the character of the pool and its healing virtue to be guessed from the complaint of the sick man, which presupposes a knowledge of it.” It is further of importance to compare Rev. xvi. 5. It would be strange if the remarkable parallelism between the angel of the waters *there*, and the angel who moves the waters *here*, had been produced only by a gloss.—Lücke has urged against the genuineness of the passage, that “in the Gospel of John the angels appear only in the spiritual, ethical sphere as ministers of special Providence.” Such a separation, however, of the ethical and natural sphere is a modern invention, and

entirely foreign to Holy Scripture. The material sphere forms no opposition to the “spiritual, ethical sphere;” but the condition of comprehensive action on the latter, is that the former be not inaccessible to the angels. The two angels in John xx. 12 evidently performed material services. Bengel remarks on ver. 6 there: “*Angeli sine dubio ministrarunt resurgentis eorumque alter linteum, alter sudarium compositum, cf. ver. 12.*” The angel of the waters in Rev. xvi. 5, indicates that the angels take part in the opening and shutting of the fountains of salvation, to which also water in its proper sense belongs. In Rev. vii. 2, it is given to the angels to hurt the earth and the sea. The angel who rolls away the stone from the tomb, Matt. xxviii. 2, does not restrict his activity to the “spiritual, ethical sphere;” and as little does the angel who, according to Acts xii. 23, smote Herod. According to Heb. i. 7, the operations of nature are in the hands of the angels. Such a confinement of the ministry of the angels, whom the Scripture designates “ministering spirits,” with the widest compass of meaning, John could not have intended, even from his whole relation to the Old Testament, in which, *e.g.*, the angel of the Lord smites the host of the king of Assyria, 2 Kings xix. 35, and where the angels are represented as active in the plagues of Egypt, Ps. lxxviii. 49.

Ver. 5. “And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.”—The eight and thirty years passed in a diseased condition are represented as the possession of the sick person: cf. ver. 6, viii. 57, xi. 17. That the sick man was a paralytic—an expression which occurs only in Matthew and Mark, not in Luke and John—is evident from his inability to walk, and from the *κράββατος*, Paralyticorum proprius, Mark ii. 4, Acts ix. 33. These thirty-eight years were brought already by Apollinaris, in his Catena, into connection with the thirty-eight years that Israel was under the curse during the journey through the wilderness. Since the sick man was in fact a type of the people of the Old Covenant, and represented the sick man Judah, the thirty-eight years are really remarkable: they serve as a hint at the resemblance of the former condition to the present; and for this reason only has John, as it seems, stated so exactly the duration of the sickness.

Ver. 6. “When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had already a long time, He saith unto him, Wilt thou be made

whole?"—*Κατακείμενος* is to be supplied with *ἔχει*. But this does not refer to his lying at the pool of Bethesda, but to his lying sick in general. We are not by *γνούσ* to suppose information received from others. The appearances would render the long continuance of the sickness probable, and the certainty was afforded by the supernatural knowledge of Jesus. The only way to avoid mere guessing with respect to the object of the question of Jesus, "Wilt thou be healed?" is to adhere to the answer, which contains the confession of the sufferer that it is impossible for him to obtain healing. This is a necessary part of the case, because, otherwise, the question would have been natural, why Jesus healed at the healing fountain, and, so to speak, took upon Him the office of the angel. It must first of all be admitted, that the latter could not help the sick man.—Ver. 7. "The impotent man answered Him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me." This answer also leads to the conclusion, that the case was no other with the pool of Bethesda than with our medicinal baths, it being merely an experiment that was tried there. For, if the water after the troubling had had an absolutely healing virtue, the sick man would have obtained help in some manner, or some one would have taken pity on him. But on account of the doubtful result, the matter was left to take its own course; and the sick man bore the delay all the more patiently, since the compassion which his situation called forth probably procured him the means of subsistence: cf. Acts iii. 2.—Ver. 8. "Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." The same direction was given by Jesus to another paralytic in Matt. ix. 6. The requisition to take up his bed, was for the object of rendering visible to the eyes of all the suddenly perfect cure, and of thus establishing the miraculous nature of the fact. Christ did not here, as elsewhere, require faith, because the sick man had not heard or seen anything of His works. "He will not reap where He has not sowed." Calov, on the other hand, intimates, that under the command to rise, etc., there was the requisition of faith, and that the sick man answered this requisition. "He would not have attempted to rise, if he had not believed the word that he could rise." Grotius, however, maintains the correct view thus far, that for the reason stated by him, Christ did not require

from the sick man a *developed* faith. The Berleburger Bibel remarks: "In this, Jesus granted it to us to know that the pool is an emblem of Himself, and that He is the tried pool, which must make us whole from all infirmities; and we, if we would only resign ourselves to Him, would be infallibly healed, however sick we might be."—Ver. 9. "And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the Sabbath." Jesus doubtless healed not although, but because, it was the Sabbath. There was no danger in delay. He would certainly have found the sick man in the same condition on the following day. We perceive the object in the result: Christ healed on the Sabbath in order to manifest Himself to be the Lord of the Sabbath, and that an occasion might be given for the following discourse, in which He made a solemn confession of His divinity.—Ver. 10. "The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the Sabbath day; it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed." According to the usual supposition, the Jews referred to Jer. xvii. 21: "Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath day." But the Mosaic law is sufficient: "Thou shalt not do any work;" to which also Jeremiah, in ver. 22, traces back the special precept. We shall not need to look beyond Moses,—the rather, since Jesus, by summoning Moses at the conclusion as an accuser against the Jews, not obscurely intimates that the Jews had brought forward Moses as an accuser against Him.—Ver. 11. "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk." He appeals with perfect right to the authority of Him who had made him whole. This person has by the miracle proved Himself to be one who can command nothing that is ungodly.—Ver. 12. "Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?" "En malitiæ ingenium," remarks Grotius, "Non dicunt: quis est ille qui te sanavit, sed quis jussit grabbatum tollere. Quærunt non quid mirentur, sed quid calumnientur."—Ver. 13. "And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed Himself away, a multitude being in that place." These last words are not to give the reason for His disappearance, but to render evident its possibility. Jesus had lost Himself in the crowd. And yet there was probably also a reason in the presence of the multitude, as He wished to avoid a scene of excite-

ment: cf. vi. 15; Matt. xvi. 16, 20. The miracle was not to remain concealed, for this would directly contradict its object. The contrary is evident also from the fact, that Jesus in ver. 14 makes Himself known to the man who was healed. But the deed was to work in stillness, on the minds of those who were in need of healing. "It is directly after such acts," remarks Lücke, "that Jesus is fondest of withdrawing, also, according to the Synoptics (a mode of designation which has come down to us from the period of Rationalism, and might very well be given up)."—Ver. 14. "Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee." There can scarcely be a doubt that the healed man had gone to the temple to give God the glory, to thank and praise Him for the cure which had been granted him: cf. Isa. xxxviii. 19–22; Luke xvii. 15; Acts iii. 7, 8. If this was his object, the address of Christ had an admirable appropriateness to his state of mind. The words, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee," like those which Jesus speaks to a sick person in Luke v. 20 ("Thy sins are forgiven thee"), are based on the conception that sickness has an intimate relation to sin, and confirms in this respect the doctrine of the Old Testament, which derives sicknesses also, together with death, from sin, as being nothing but the preliminary stages of death, and as included in it—the rather, since it is said, *In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die*;<sup>1</sup> and which further threatens diseases as the punishment of sin, Lev. xxvi. 16; Deut. xxviii. 22 (cf. 1 Cor. xi. 30.), and whose general doctrine of retribution, as it is confirmed by Christ in Luke xiii. 1 sq., and in the threatenings of judgment on Jerusalem, admits of no other view of sickness. Against those who have attempted to restrict the declaration of the text and Luke v. 20 to an individual case, I have already remarked (*Beiträge*, Th. 3, S. 580 f.) as follows:

"1. If such a reference existed, it would be more distinctly intimated. Since the view that *all* sickness is a punishment of sin was widely diffused, no one would understand the declarations otherwise than as general; and since the Lord did not prevent this apprehension, it cannot be founded in a misunderstanding. 2. If

<sup>1</sup> The truth of this declaration is attested by the words of Voltaire to D'Alembert: "Vie de malingre, vie insupportable, mort continue avec de moment de résurrection."

the declarations had an individual reference, Jesus must have given a proof of His omniscience, which is not at all intimated. For no one will maintain that palsy is always the consequence of certain sins. 3. The restriction to individual cases is inadmissible on account of the character of the healings generally. Even if we had no express declaration of Christ concerning the connection of sickness and sin, the mere fact that He healed sick persons would have been sufficient to establish this connection. A sick man, whom Christ—not a Hippocrates, to whom superior skill is granted, but the Saviour—heals, is by this very act declared to be a sinner. If we tear away the connection between sickness and sin, we destroy the relation of the demoniac to the sick person, and remove that which is common to the two. In like manner, also, the connection is removed from the healing of the sick with the raising of the dead, which is based on the principle, that death is the wages of sin.”—That ix. 2, 3 affords no justification of the individual rendering, will be proved in the remarks on that passage.—Calvin says: “This admonition teaches, that all evil that we suffer is to be attributed to our sin. We should give glory to God, that He, the best of fathers, has no pleasure in our misery, and on this account never treats us more severely than He is offended by our sins.” Quesnel: “We will learn from these words,—1. That sickness and suffering are the punishment of sin, and that hence the best remedy which can be applied against it is repentance and conversion. 2. That suffering is to minister to our instruction; and that, after the healing of the body or the soul, we must be in great humility and profound gratitude towards God.” *To sin*, here designates not the condition of the dominion of sin, but the requisition is directed against sin in general; to sin no more, is to be the fixed purpose and the ruling principle in the life of him who by God’s grace has been freed from severe suffering. When this purpose is alive, and is the ruling power of the life, divine grace grants forgiveness for that which, from human weakness, still remains of sinful character.—The “worse” is not to be referred merely to the future existence, for the sick man had not experienced the full measure even of earthly punishment. No one is so miserable that he cannot be more so.

Ver. 15. “The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him whole.”—That we may attribute

the best design to the healed person, is shown by the fact of his being healed (for Christ would not have healed a miscreant), and that he went immediately to the temple. He, innocent man, has no foreboding of the depth of pharisaic obduracy and malice. He wishes at the same time to show that he is grateful to Jesus, and to do his duty to his superiors, by pointing the Saviour out to them. He trusts that the impression of His Person will overthrow all their scruples.

Ver. 16. “And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath day.”—The words *καὶ ἐγίτουν αὐτὸν ἀποκτεῖναι* are wanting in very important critical authorities, and the unfounded prejudice of the critics for the shorter reading has led them to declare the words to be spurious. But their genuineness is favoured, 1. by the Old Testament passage, Ps. xxxvii. 32, “The wicked watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him;” 2. the mere word *ἔδιωκον*, without a statement of the manner of the persecution, is too vague; 3. the *μᾶλλον*, in ver. 18, presupposes that the Jews had already previously sought to kill Jesus. Lücke thinks, “The words, genuine and appropriate in ver. 18, make here an unsuitable addition. How could persons versed in the law seek to kill Jesus for a violation of the Sabbath, which, besides, was not clearly made out?” But the matter had already gone so far, that the Jews had attempted His life (iv. 1–3); and already, at the first Passover, Nicodemus came to Jesus by night, and Jesus did not commit Himself even to those in whom there was already a beginning of faith. It was precisely with respect to the Sabbath that a special strictness prevailed at that time; and to bring this to bear upon Jesus was the more natural, since His proceeding seemed to have the character of a provocation. If they would not perceive in Him the Son of God, it was natural to apply here the Mosaic decision, according to which the man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath day was stoned, Num. xv. That the punishment of death was then inflicted for the slightest violation of the Sabbath, if committed *purposely* (for this was the point on which it depended),—*e. g.*, plucking ears of corn,—is shown by Lightfoot on Matt. xii. 2.

Ver. 17. “But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.”—He *answered* them, to the charges which

they had made against Him, in the direction indicated in ver. 16. Jesus does not here, as in Luke xiii. 15, xiv. 5, enter into the question, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?" from a general human point of view. He bases His deduction on His wholly peculiar and individual relation to the Father. To present this fully before the chiefs of the people as a testimony for them, and, under some circumstances, against them, and to make a confession in reference to this, is the object for which He has brought on the whole conflict.—If any other than the Son of God in the most peculiar sense should say, "My Father," etc., it would be a great error. The necessity of rest does not exist for God, but it does indeed for man, who is rendered dull and stupid by unceasing labour, and needs the regularly returning day of rest, as a corrective of the injury done by the week.—It is a confusing remark of De Wette, that Christ corrects the false opinion, that God has rested since the creation, by the idea of the continued creative or preserving activity of God. The thought of nature existing independently by the side of God, on which the failure to recognise the uninterrupted continuous activity of God must be founded, could not enter the mind of a Jew. The proposition that God works unceasingly, on the Sabbath not less than on the other days, was common to the Jews with Christ. The rest on the seventh day in Gen. ii. 3, as is expressly remarked, refers only to the creative work, and was always so referred by the Jews. It pertained only to the first Sabbath. The later Divine operation knows no distinction of days. That Christ called God His Father in a different sense from that in which He was so called by all Israel (Isa. liv. 7), was implied, as the Jews perceived, in the conclusion which He drew from this relation. Only on participation in the Godhead could be based the entire exemption from the sabbatic command to which Christ lays claim. This is the real point at issue. If the Jews had believed Jesus to be the Son of God in the fullest sense, they would not have commenced a dispute with Him.<sup>1)</sup> With the expression "hitherto," cf. ἀπ' ἀρχῆς κόσμου ἕως τοῦ νῦν, Matt. xxiv. 21. It indi-

<sup>1</sup> Beza: "Nam si Deus pater meus (dixerat Christus) operans sabbato, non violat sabbatum, nec ego cum operor sabbato, sabbatum violo: quæ conclusio stare non potest, nisi æqualitas Personarum Patris et Filii statuatur, ut recte Patres aduersus Arianos hoc loco docuerunt."

cates the uninterrupted operation from the beginning of the world to the present time, in which the act of healing just performed gave a testimony to the continuance of this agency. Quesnel: "Sublime defence against the charge of violating the Sabbath! It is marvellous how God causes the malice of the enemies of the truth to subserve the revelation of the sublimest truths of religion; and how He instructs His elect, while apparently He is speaking only to His enemies." Calvin calls attention to the circumstance, that Christ, in justifying His action, justifies at the same time that of the sick man, in carrying his bed: "erat enim appendix et quasi pars miraculi, quia nihil quam ejus approbatio erat."

Ver. 18. "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His own Father, making Himself equal with God."—"Christ," says Calvin, "has taught us by His example that we need never give way to the rage of the ungodly, but rather maintain God's truth, so far as necessity requires it, against the will and the opposition of the whole world." To *His own Father* here, corresponds *His own Son* in Rom. viii. 32. It is the Father in the special individual sense, as opposed to the general conception of fatherhood. Tholuck incorrectly remarks, "Although in the Old Testament, in some few passages (?), God is designated as the Father of the people, it was an unusual thing for an individual Israelite to employ this name. .... Hence the charge of blasphemy which the Jews bring." [Eng. Trans. p. 152 sq.] It was not the use of the name of Father in itself which offended the Jews (cf., e. g., Ecclesiasticus xxiii. 1, 4, Wisdom ii. 16, where the pious are reproached by the ungodly: ἀλαζονεύεται πατέρα Θεόν), but that Christ laid claim to such a fatherhood of God as involved a dispensation from the fourth commandment. This does not follow from the Divine fatherhood in the common sense, in which only the love like that of a father to a son is regarded, but involves a fatherhood in the most peculiar sense, and a claim to participation in the Godhead. Augustine: "Ecce intelligunt Judæi quod non intelligunt Ariani. Ariani quippe inæqualem Patri filium dicunt, et inde hæresis pulsat ecclesiam. Ecce ipsi cæci, ipsi interfectores Christi intellexerunt tamen verba Christi."

Ver. 19. "Then answered Jesus, and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do : for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."—Jesus does not begin by proving His intimate and inseparable connection with the Father, which forms the theme of the whole following discourse, but leaves this till vers. 31–47. He leads them first deeper into His relation to the Father, develops the significance of this, and demonstrates that, in consequence of this relation, it is of the utmost importance to place one's self in the proper relation to Him in whose power are life and death, salvation and perdition. The solemn oath-like asseveration, *ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν*, occurs three times in this discourse, and shows at the same time that here it is not anything doubtful, but absolute knowledge that is spoken of; and that here also it is things of paramount importance which are in question, for only with regard to such things are asseverations of this kind in place. As Heumann correctly says: "This strong and repeated asseveration shows, that what our Lord is now to bring forward is a most sacred truth, and that he who attacks this cannot be called a Christian."—Jesus can do nothing of Himself, because there does not exist in Him a self separate from the Father. The words, *ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ*, are to be understood as if enclosed in quotation-marks, since Jesus takes them from the mouth or the heart of His opponents. P. Anton: "The words, *of himself*, as used by the Jews, had a poison in them; and Christ means that this must be removed, for the case is no otherwise." That He acted *ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ*, was the central-point in the accusations of His opponents. It was on His own authority, they asserted, that Christ had broken the Sabbath, and said that God was His Father. That the Son can do nothing of Himself is a high privilege, as it proceeds from His inseparable connection of essence with the Father. The possibility of acting of one's self, dissevered from God, exists only on the lower stage of creation. Thus Satan, *e. g.*, speaks lies *ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων*, viii. 44. As it is here said of the Son, that He can do nothing of Himself, so in xvi. 13, of the Holy Spirit, that He does not speak of Himself. Quesnel says: "We will love this incomprehensible mystery, and, as true children of God, will strive to copy it, by acting not at all of ourselves, but in

dependence on God and Christ, as the principle and pattern of our actions."—The activity of the Father and the Son is always coincident; for, as the Son can do nothing without the Father, so the Father also can do nothing without the Son.—The words *ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ* are to a certain extent an interpolation, containing a side-thought, which does not enter into the following *ἔὰν μή τι βλέπῃ τὸν πατέρα ποιοῦντα*: The Son can do nothing (of Himself), but what, etc.; or, "can do nothing" may be repeated before the *ἔὰν*.—To the negative assertion is directly added the positive: for what He doeth, that doeth the Son likewise. The unity of essence with the Father on which the negative assertion is founded, includes also the positive.—If Jesus stood in this relation to the Father, the Jews were greatly deluded if they supposed that they were maintaining the cause of God against Him;—without observing it, they were in the most proper sense among the number of those who fight against God. Calvin says: "Hic causæ status est, quum illi in carnis aspectu defixi Christum contemnerent, jubet eos altius consurgere ac Deum intueri."

Ver. 20. "For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth: and He will show Him greater works than these, that ye may marvel."—This *showing*, taken from the human relation of father to son, is not to be viewed as a dogmatic, but as a conceptional expression. *Than these*,—e.g., the healing of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda. The *marvelling* will attain its highest point at the resurrection and the last judgment, in which these greater things will culminate.

Ver. 21. "For as the Father raiseth the dead and quickeneth, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will."—The Saviour declares Himself more particularly concerning the greater works. *Herein is comprised the entire life-giving activity of the Redeemer. It is afterwards divided into its two halves,—that on this side the grave, ver. 24, and that beyond, vers. 25–29,—both introduced by the corresponding ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ἵμεν, and limited with respect to each other by the use of the Present tense in connection with the Preterite of the one, and of the Future of the other.* The words, "as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth," are founded on Hos. vi. 2, the only passage in the Old Testament in which, as here, *raising up* and *quicken*ing are immediately

connected with each other : “ After two days will He revive us ; on the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight.” (That it is not a mere rising which is here spoken of, but a resurrection, is shown by *Simson*, in his commentary on this passage. This is also favoured by comparison with the vision of Ezekiel in chap. xxxvii., the parallelism of revivification, and the fact that life is mentioned as the consequence of the raising up.)—As the conception of life in the Old Testament far transcends that of mere bare life, and is repeatedly interchanged with that of salvation—cf. *e.g.*, Deut. xxx. 20, where it is said of God to Israel, “ He is thy life ;” Ps. xxxvi. 9, where the Psalmist says to God, “ For with Thee is the fountain of life,” *q.d.*, in Thee not only bare life, but that also which really deserves the name of life, has its origin ; Thou art the fountain of all salvation ; Ps. xvi. 11, where life is connected with joy and pleasure, because a miserable life is not to be called a life : cf. on the Old Testament conception of life, the remarks on i. 4—so also the Scripture carries the idea of death still further. It comprehends under it all those conditions of which it may be said, “ Thou hast a name to live, but art dead.” This conception meets us, even on the threshold of revelation, in the declaration, “ On the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die.” The miserable existence into which man fell from the moment of the apostasy is to be regarded as death. Death occurs thus also in Deut. xxxii. 39, “ I kill and I make alive ;” *i.e.*, I deliver over to misery, and I lead to salvation. “ The LORD killeth, and maketh alive : He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up,” says Hannah in 1 Sam. ii. 6, on the ground of her own experience, since she has out of deep misery attained to happiness. Cf. the passages dependent upon this, Tobit xiii. 2 ; Wisdom xvi. 13. Recovery from severe sickness is designated in Isa. xxxviii. 9 and elsewhere as a reviving, a form of death being recognised in disease. Israel, as fallen into deep misery, is beheld by Ezekiel in chap. xxxvii. as buried in death ; and the bestowal of salvation is represented under the figure of a resurrection. In Ps. xxii. 29, the miserable are represented as those who go down to the dust, who cannot keep alive their own souls,—as deceased persons, the living dead. We find the same conception in Ps. xlvi. 14, “ God guides us even in death,” *q.d.*, when we fall into a helpless condition ; Ps. lxviii.

20, "God is to us a God of salvation, and the Lord delivers us from death;" Ps. lxxxv. 6, "Wilt Thou not return and *revive* us?" Ps. lxxx. 18, "So will we not go back from Thee: only quicken us;" Ps. lxxi. 20, "Thou, who hast showed us great and sore *troubles*, wilt return and *quicken* us,"—where trouble is manifestly represented as death.—But certain though it is from these parallel passages, especially Hos. vi. 2, that under the dead whom the Father raises and quickens are comprised the miserable, as being the living dead, yet it would still be arbitrary to exclude the dead commonly so called, since in the context there is nothing which hinders us from understanding the dead in the most comprehensive sense. It is meant to include both the dead in their graves, ver. 28, and those out of them, the walking corpses.—The word *ζωοποιεῖ*, *He quickeneth*, is to be taken with the same extension of meaning of the Son, as of the Father. It ends in the "resurrection of *life*," in ver. 29; but it begins even in this life, when Christ delivers those who have fallen into deepest misery from the bands of such death, so that they pass from death unto life.—The antithesis of the judgment, in ver. 22, shows that the awakening to the resurrection of judgment, ver. 29, is not comprehended under the quickening. The godless existence to which those awake, does not deserve the name of life. They fall under the "second death," Rev. xx. 14, which is still worse than the first. To the same result leads also the expression, "whom He will." This requires a quickening which takes place with a selection, and which is therefore not imparted to all without distinction.—If we should refer *ζωοποιεῖ*, in so far as it is declared of the Son, merely to a *spiritual* quickening, we might separate the quickening by the Son from that by the Father. The words *ώσπερ*—*ζωοποιεῖ* refer manifestly to the Old Testament, as the alone warrant for a truth assumed to be already established and acknowledged, to which a new one is here to be added. In all passages of the Old Testament, however, it is not a *spiritual* quickening which is spoken of; and even in so far as this is considered, it must be understood as a transition from deep misery to salvation. A limitation to spiritual quickening is contradicted also by vi. 39, where *δέδωκέ μοι* corresponds to *οὐς θέλει*, and according to which, the life-giving activity of Christ will attain its highest point at the last day.—The Present is here

that which is frequently used in general sentences, when the declaration applies equally to the present and the future (*Buttmann*, S. 177), or when the action is to be designated in itself only, without determining the time.—The words, “whom He will,” indicate that no other limit is set to the life-giving activity of the Son than His own will; so that thus he may be absolutely certain of life who only gains His favour, and that one’s whole energy should be directed towards this end, which is the only worthy end of human existence. It is a matter of course that the will is not an arbitrary will, but is governed by the law of Christ’s being, according to which He loves those who love Him, and grants life as the reward of faith.

Ver. 22. “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.”—To quicken and to judge are closely connected activities, so that he who exercises one must exercise the other. Thus, if the judging activity of God is exercised only through Christ, the quickening must also be exercised only through Him. *Grotius*: “Bene autem ponitur γάρ, quia ejusdem potestatis est absolvere et damnare, et recte hoc additum, *ut quos spes non movet malis coerceantur*.” The *judging* here, in antithesis to the *quicken*, is the judgment of condemnation. Of the believer it is said, in ver. 24, “He cometh not into condemnation.” In ver. 27 also, the execution of judgment forms the antithesis to the gift of life. In ver. 29, it is only the resurrection of the godless which is a resurrection unto condemnation.—The judgment is completed at the last day. To exclude the last judgment, of which every reader must at once think, is purely arbitrary, and is opposed to vers. 24, 27, 29. As, however, the quickening activity takes its beginning in this life, ver. 24, so also the judging, ὁ μὴ πιστεύων ἥδη κέκριται, iii. 18. That the judgment begins even in the present life, is shown also by ver. 30, and by ix. 39, where the Lord says that He is come for judgment into this world, that they which see not may see, and they which see may be made blind.—When it is said that the Father judgeth no man, it is evident from the analogy of ver. 21 that the thought is, that the Father judges only through the Son. It is *a priori* inconceivable that God, who bore of old the name, “Judge of the whole earth,” is excluded from the judgment. *Bengel*: “Pater non judicat solus, nec sine filio, judicat tamen ver. 45, Act. xvii. 31, Rom. iii. 6.”—

Quesnel remarks : “To Christ belongs every visible and invisible judgment, special and general, for time and for eternity, by the withdrawal of grace or by the appointment of suffering.—I acknowledge Thee and adore Thee as my Judge, O Jesus, Thou unlimited monarch of life and death. My lot is in Thy hands ; for Thou givest us Thy grace according to the measure which Thou hast determined, and Thou appointest the punishment according to the measure and desert of our sins. Judge me, Lord, not in Thine anger, but in Thy compassion. Punish me in this world, not in the other ; not by taking from me Thy Holy Spirit, or by driving me from Thy presence, but rather by withholding the outward pleasures of this life, and the miserable gratifications of this ruined world.”

Ver. 23. “That all should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father who hath sent Him.”—If the Son no less than the Father has life and death in His hand, the direct consequence is this, that the Son is to be not less honoured than the Father ; and foolish and ruinous the position of the Jews, who professed to honour the Father, but persecuted the Son even to the death. This declaration must have descended with overwhelming force upon their heads.—Bengel remarks on *τιμῶσι* : “vel libenter, judicium effugientes per fidem, vel inviti, judicis iram sentientes.” But that the honour here is rather that which is voluntary, is shown by what follows : ὁ μὴ τιμῶν, etc. If they will not comply with their obligation, they fall under punishment ; if they will not freely give honour to Him who has life and death in His hand, He will be glorified in them in their destruction. If they will not sing His praise, they must weep His praise.

Ver. 24. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation ; but is passed from death unto life.”—Lücke remarks : “The formula, ἀμήν ἀμήν λέγω ὑμῖν announces that the two propositions, which contain the principal declaration of Christ, are to be especially confirmed and emphasized.” Even in this is implied the essential difference of these propositions, of which the former (ver. 24) refers to the life-giving activity of Christ in this world, the other to the bestowal of life at the last day. P. Anton says,

“How many asseverations occur one after the other in vers. 24, 25! Thus we may conceive how it must have seemed, when Jesus spoke this to the Jews, who would have killed Him on the spot if they could. And yet He discoursed to them so earnestly and so lovingly, after the manner of a helper, to set them right, to gain them over from their murderous lusts, and to free them from their false spirit.”—The words, *ὁ τὸν λόγον μου ἀκούων*, refer to Deut. xviii. 15: “The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; *unto Him ye shall hearken;*” and ver. 19: “And whosoever will not hearken unto My words, which He shall speak in My name, I will require it of him.” *Heareth* is therefore to be taken in the emphatic sense. He who hears merely outwardly, is as though he heard not. We are also not to be content with the mere outward hearing, because faith in relation to Him who sends is spoken of. It would be otherwise if it were written, *ὁ ἀκούων καὶ πιστεύων*, cf. xii. 47. He who *hears* My word—it is evidently the sense—and by this means shows his faith in Him, etc. Likewise emphatic is *ἀκούειν* in viii. 43, 47, ix. 27, x. 3, 8, and other passages.—The *λόγος* here is different from the *φωνή* in ver. 25. The word is the Gospel, the voice is the Word of Power which calls to life the physically dead.—The circumstance that the life is designated as *everlasting*, casts a deep shadow on this present life, causing it to seem like a dark valley of death; and is in harmony with the Apocalypse, throughout which the eye of faith is represented as looking beyond the troubled present to the serene and clear future. But we are not on this account to regard the *possession* here (*ἔχει*) as one of mere hope; for life, though it has its proper seat in eternity—as is also plainly shown by vi. 40, where life eternal is connected with the resurrection—stretches over into time: we taste the powers of the world to come, our conversation is in heaven. “His love can make the present time sweet as the eternal clime.” On the stretching over of eternal life into the present existence, cf. remarks on iii. 15.—To the *μεταβέβηκε* here corresponds that which is said of the unbelieving in iii. 18, “he is condemned already.” The transition from death to life, from ruin to salvation, has already been made by the believer, who has received the powers of the world to come, and can rejoice in God his Saviour, though he is still

afflicted with many of the issues of death, which do not disappear until he passes into the future state of existence. Cf. 1 John iii. 14; Rom. vi. 13. Augustine compares Luke xv. 32: ὁ ἀδελφός σου οὗτος νεκρὸς ἦν καὶ ἀνέζησε, and remarks: "fit proinde jam quædam resurrectio, et transeunt homines a morte quadam ad quandam vitam; a morte infidelitatis ad vitam fidei; a morte falsitatis ad vitam veritatis, a morte iniquitatis ad vitam justitiae. Est ergo et ista quædam resurrectio mortuorum." Calvin: "Transitum a morte jam esse factum non inepte dicit, quia et incorruptibile est in filiis Dei vitæ semen, ex quo vocati sunt, et jam in cœlesti gloria per spem Christo consident, et regnum Dei in se habent certo constitutum—Spiritus, qui in illis habitat, vita est, quæ reliquias mortis tandem abolebit." If the true fountain of life is in Chirst, and if faith is a true connection with Him, the transition from death unto life must necessarily commence in this present existence, although it doth not yet appear what we shall be.

Ver. 25. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live."—The dead are here the righteous that have fallen asleep. For life nowhere here stands of bare life, and the antithesis to life *here* is formed by the judgment in vers. 27. It is impossible to separate our declaration from vers. 28, 29, where all considerate expositors will admit the reference to the physical resurrection—as, e.g., Lücke understands "the φωνὴ τοῦ νιοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ here of the λόγος in ver. 24; the dead who hear, of the spiritually dead, who hear and believe His word; and finally, the ζήσονται of the present ζωὴ αἰώνιος." The grounds on which a difference from vers. 28, 29 has been assumed are not tenable. Appeal is made, 1. to καὶ νῦν ἔστι. This, however, might stand just as well also in ver. 28, and is indeed to be supplied from our verse with ἔρχεται ὥρα. The words, καὶ νῦν ἔστι, which are also used in iv. 23 of a matter which presupposes the atoning death of Christ and the effusion of the Holy Spirit, apply to all great future developments of the kingdom of God even to the end of days, in respect of all that Christ will do until the final completion of His kingdom. All this has its ground and warrant in the incarnation and epiphany of Christ. Especially with respect to the resurrection, the applicability of the words, καὶ νῦν ἔστι, is attested by the in-

stances of Christ's raising from the dead, which were as a prelude to the future resurrection. These words, moreover, make only a secondary statement; for here, as in iv. 23, the substance of the fact is represented as purely future. This does not agree with the spiritual awakening, which was then complete when Christ spoke these words. 2. Appeal is made to *οἱ ἀκούσαντες*. This is said to make a distinction between those who hear and those who do not hear, which there is not in the case of the bodily resurrection. But it is a critical thing to found assertions of so much importance on the article. According to that which immediately precedes, all the dead—all those who have died in faith—hear the voice, by which even such a distinction is excluded. The article is rather to render prominent the thought, that to hear and to live are inseparably connected. The article designates the whole class of those who have heard, *q.d.*, all who have heard.—But it is decisive against the reference to the spiritual resurrection, that it is here the *voice*, and not the *word*, which is spoken of—mere hearing, not hearing and believing. Our declaration is thus distinguished from ver. 24, and accords with ver. 28.—With respect to the *voice*, cf. xi. 43, *καὶ τὰῦτα εἰπὼν, φωνὴ μεγάλῃ ἐκραύγασε, Λάζαρε, δεῦρο ἔξω*; 1 Thess. iv. 16, where the *φωνὴ ἀρχαγγέλου* is spoken of; Mark v. 41; Luke vii. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 52. The Old Testament passage is, as it seems, Ezek. xxxvii. 7, “There was a voice (cf. i. 25), and behold a noise, and the bones came near, bone to its bone.” What the voice, which was no other than that of God, said, is to be learned from the result. Usually in this passage the voice is identified with the noise; but the prophet clearly distinguishes the two by *וְנִיחַד*.—The *hearing* is a part of the pictorial representation; as also the call which Jesus makes to the maiden, the young man at Nain, and to Lazarus, had no significance for the dead, but only for the bystanders.

Ver. 26. “For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given the Son to have life in Himself”—In Himself; so that He is, no less than the Father, the fountain of life to believers, and that the words of Ps. xxxvi., “with Thee is the fountain of life,” apply also to Him. To have life in Himself, and indeed in such fulness that His wealth is sufficient for all, far transcends the stage of the creature, and presupposes His full divinity. Augustine: “Manet ergo Pater vita, manet et

Filius vita: Pater vita in semetipso, non a Filio; Filius vita in semetipso, sed a Patre."

Ver. 27. "And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man."—Son of man in itself means merely *man*, and is used in this sense here. The transfer of the judgment, however, is founded not on the humanity in itself, but on the fact that the *Son of God*, to whom indeed *αὐτῷ* refers, is man, and that thus Christ is the God-man. On His incarnation is founded the right, which He alone possesses, to bestow life and to execute judgment. This is the reward of His humiliation in the flesh, and His obedience even unto death. A commentary on this is afforded by Phil. ii. 6-11. Allusion is here made, as in all passages where Christ is designated as the Son of man, to Dan. vii. 13, 14, where the Messiah appears as the Son of man in the clouds of heaven, and absolute dominion being given unto Him, He receives authority to judge the whole world. Even in this passage the gift of dominion is represented as the reward of the incarnation, and it is on this account that Christ is designated as the Son of man. Christ cannot as such have obtained this character in heaven: it must have been appropriated to Him on earth. The appearance of Christ in the flesh, which is expressly foretold in Dan. ix., is here presupposed.—The reason, "because He is the Son of man," applies likewise to the bestowal of life. Bengel: "hic homo homines salvat, hic homo homines judicat." That it is here specially declared of the judgment, is to be explained from the circumstance, that in Daniel the Son of man comes to judgment.—The Son of man was the rock on which the Jews stumbled. In opposition to them, Christ says that He will come to judgment not merely although, but because, He is the Son of man. His very humanity is the ground, not only of His power to bless, but of His authority to judge.

Ver. 28. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear His voice, 29. and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."—In opposition to those who would refer these words also to the spiritual resurrection, Augustine briefly and well remarks, "Quid evidentius? quid expressius? Corpora sunt in monumentis: animæ non sunt in monumentis,

nec justorum nec iniquorum.” Marvel not at this: the Lord does not, in order to decrease their astonishment, oppose to the lesser wonder a still greater, but the renewed affirmation, that that which He has ascribed to Himself in vers. 25–27 will surely take place. In like manner, the requisition not to marvel stands before the new exposition of the same matter in the conversation with Nicodemus, iii. 7.—This concluding exposition and confirmation is distinguished from vers. 25–27 by its close adherence to the Old Testament passage, Dan. xii. 2: “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”—The hour is coming. This is not a mere assertion: Jesus showed His power over death by raising the dead, and afterwards by His own resurrection. He certainly would not have said this, if there had not been already facts which showed Him to be the conqueror over death. The raising of the daughter of Jairus occurred in the beginning of our Lord’s Galilean ministry, and the raising of the young man at Nain had probably also taken place. To John in prison (that the Baptist was already imprisoned we learned from iv. 1–3) Jesus sent word, as of a fact, *νεκροὶ ἐγέρονται*, Matt. xi. 5.—The roots of well-doing and evil-doing are faith and unbelief. Where there is faith, it must manifest itself in works, as our Lord teaches in Matt. vii. 19, 20, that the tree may be known by its fruit; and our Lord frequently renders works prominent, because with respect to faith one may be very easily deceived. Full justice had been done to faith in ver. 24, cf. iii. 15, 18, 36.—Let us now cast another glance in recapitulation at the discourse of Christ from ver. 21. As the Father, so also the Son, has power to quicken and authority to judge; so that the Son must be not less honoured than the Father: vers. 21–23. Even in this present existence, His quickening power is shown in this, that He makes His faithful ones partakers of life (His judging activity in this life, which coincides with His saving, is passed over), ver. 24. But His power to quicken, and His authority to judge, will be most gloriously manifested at the last day, vers. 25–29.

Ver. 30. “I can of Mine own self do nothing: as I hear I judge: and My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of Him who hath sent Me.”—This verse recurs to ver. 19, and forms the conclusion. That Jesus can

do nothing of Himself—that the wall of separation which the Jews erected between Him and the Father exists only in their imagination—this is now quite evident after the comprehensive discussion of His relation to the Father.—As I hear I judge: a judicial act was the healing of the impotent man; a judicial declaration, the word, “Arise, take up thy bed, and walk.” Jesus might have spoken of doing instead of judging; but He emphasizes the judgment, in reference to Ps. lxxii. 1, 2, “Give the king Thy judgments, O God, and Thy righteousness unto the king’s sons. He shall judge Thy people with righteousness, and Thy poor with judgment;” and to Isa. xi. 3, 4, where it is said of the Messiah: “He judgeth not after the sight of His eyes, nor reproveth after the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness judgeth He the poor, and reproveth with equity for the meek of the earth.” The judging according to that which He hears (from the Father) forms the necessary supplementary positive to the negative declaration in this passage, “nor reproveth after the hearing of His ears.”—To seek not His own will, but the will of God, has been, as a penetrating life-principle, since Gen. iii., far beyond the common sphere of man, and only the God-man could thus truly speak of Himself. The Berleburger Bibel: “Even in such a person did God wish to show that it is a blessed thing to submit and not have one’s own will, and that in this God is graciously well pleased. To this submission we were not to be brought: it needed therefore that it should be displayed to us in the sublime person of Christ, whose example is animating. His will was dissolved and emptied into His Father’s will; His humanity was quite without itself—it was an instrument by which God worked. Such an obedient mind there has always been in the servants of God: Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” Calvin, with respect to this whole declaration, remarks: “Christus hic de nuda sua divinitate verba non facit, sed ut carne nostra induitus est, se ab externa specie minime aestimandum esse admonet, quia aliquid habeat homine altius.”

Ver. 31. “If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true.”—Jesus had justified the founding of His Sabbath-ministry on the Divine example (vers. 19–30), by leading them into the depths of His relation to the Father. This was of the greatest significance. He places before His enemies the entire

importance of the present question, bringing them to see, even if they did not purposely harden themselves, that it referred to nothing less than life and death ; that it was thus possible that they might here commit a crime against Omnipotence, which could not be expiated but by their destruction ; and that they might indeed be found to be such as in the most peculiar sense fight against God. It must greatly quicken our zeal in the investigation of the truth if we thus view the controversy in its whole circumference, and descend into its lowest depth. But seen as the Jews saw it, it was natural to object that the entire relation of the Father to the Son was a matter in suspense, having nothing in its support but the invalid self-testimony of Jesus, and resting at last on a mere assumption. This objection Jesus now meets in vers. 31–47. He shows that the asserted relation to the Father has the strongest proof in its support: the testimony of the Father Himself, which He has given in a threefold manner—by John, by the works of Christ, and by the prophecy of the Old Testament. The objection which Jesus here anticipates, is expressed in viii. 13: *εἰπον οὖν αὐτῷ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι· σὺ περὶ σεαυτοῦ μαρτυρεῖς· ἡ μαρτυρία σου οὐκ ἔστιν ἀληθής.* When Jesus there answers, ver. 14: *καὶν ἐγὼ μαρτυρῶ περὶ ἐμαυτοῦ, ἀληθής ἔστιν ἡ μαρτυρία μου,* this is only in apparent contradiction to our text. It is implied in the nature of the case, that in the latter *truth* stands only in the judicial sense, in which that only is considered true which can be proved by the testimony of uninterested persons.

Ver. 32. “There is another that beareth witness of Me ; and I know that the witness which He witnesseth of Me is true.”—That this *other* is the Father, is implied in the nature of the case. For, in respect of an inward relation in the Divine essence, God alone can give a valid testimony. That this other is God, is evident moreover from the verbal reference in which *καὶ ὁ πέμψας με πατήρ, αὐτὸς μεμαρτύρηκε περὶ ἐμοῦ*, ver. 37, stands to the words of our text, and from the parallel passages : viii. 18, “I am one that bear witness of Myself, and the Father that sent Me beareth witness of Me ;” ver. 54, “If I honour Myself, My honour is nothing : it is My Father that honoureth Me ;” and 1 John v. 9. To God also we are led by the words, “I know that His witness is true,” which refers anew to the secret connection of essence between the Son and the Father. If by the other we should understand the Baptist, we should

thus too highly exalt the latter. The other cannot be the Baptist on this account, even that Jesus, in ver. 34, declares it to be beneath His dignity to ground Himself on a human testimony. By a reference to John also we obtain a wholly untenable antithesis between the testimony of John and the testimony of *God*, which He affords in the works of Christ. John is either of no significance here, or he is regarded as the Divine organ, so that it is not he who bears witness, but God by him. John himself, in i. 33, grounds the significance of his testimony singly and alone on the Divine inspiration, which he had received.—If, then, this other is the Father, vers. 33–35 cannot be regarded otherwise than as containing the first witness which the Father has borne to the Son by the mouth of John, the greatest prophet under the Old Dispensation. Those who apprehend the thought otherwise, create for themselves another by their own insertions, instead of following the real connection: Another bears witness of Me, and primarily indeed by John.

Ver. 33. “Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.”—The circumstance that they had sent unto John, is significant, because in so doing they had acknowledged John in his prophetic dignity and as the Divine organ: cf. i. 19. Since the deputation was an official one, it is natural to assume that we have here before us an official transaction, and that this is not merely a private conversation. In i. 19 also it is the Jews who are spoken of; and yet the whole narrative shows that the deputation was from the highest national court, the Chief Council.

Ver. 34. “But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.”—John bore witness as a prophet; for if it had not been so, that which he spoke of Christ would not have had the dignity of a testimony, which exists only when one speaks that which he has seen and heard. Thus the testimony of John did not properly proceed from “a man,” but from the Holy Spirit, who spoke through the prophets. But since the Divine mission and inspiration of John was controverted by his opponents, since they gave him out to be a mere man left to himself, and the contrary could not be proved in a palpable manner—the Baptist not having performed *miracles*—in the present question his testimony was, so to speak, in a judicial sense that of a *man*. That this was the reason why Jesus declares that He will not insist on the testimony of John, as being that of a

man, is evident from the fact, that afterwards the testimony of Moses is urged as perfectly valid, his Divine mission and inspiration being fully acknowledged by the opponents. How little it can be the object to deprecate the significance of John and of his testimony, is already evident from the high importance attributed to this testimony in chap. i.—An analogy is afforded by Isa. vii. 13, where Isaiah says to the unbelieving Ahaz of Judea : “ Is it too little for you to provoke man, that you provoke also my God ?” “ When Ahaz,” it was remarked on this passage in the Christology [Eng. Trans. ii. p. 43], “ had before refused to believe in the simple announcement of the prophet, he sinned to a certain degree against *man* only, against the prophet only, by unjustly suspecting him of a deceitful pretension to a Divine revelation. But when Ahaz declined the offered sign, *God Himself* was provoked by him, and his wickedness came evidently to light.” The testimony of the works of Christ stands to the testimony of John in a similar relation to that in which the sign here stands to the mere announcement. In both there is the same Divine causality, but the degree of demonstration is different.—But even though Jesus does not wish to lay great stress on the testimony of John, or to make it the central-point of His argument, He needs not to be quite silent concerning it, for this would be a severity towards His opponents. Perhaps they will, to their own salvation, cast aside their unfounded and criminal distrust of John, whose Divine mission, though it cannot be palpably demonstrated, is yet adequately attested to their consciences.

Ver. 35. “ He was a burning and a shining light ; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.”—In the symbolism of the Mosaic law, and in Zech. iv., the Church of the Lord is represented under the figure of a candlestick. “ The light,” it was remarked on this symbol in the Third Part of my *Contributions* (Beiträge, S. 354), “ can denote only the operations of the Spirit of God, the spiritual light, which is radiated by the spiritually animated Church into the surrounding darkness.” Under the figure of lamps and candlesticks the Scriptures also represent individual believers, in whom the essence of the Church of God is particularized. Cf. Matt. v. 14–16, the parable of the ten virgins, and Phil. ii. 15. John was the burning and shining light, in comparison with which, all others may be disregarded. The ήν intimates that the ministry of John was already con-

cluded. He was not then dead, but in prison ; cf. iv. 1-3, where his imprisonment is referred to as having already taken place ; and Jesus prophetically knows that the imprisonment will end in death, and that John will never again appear on the scene of his ministry.—The *ἡθελήσατε* intimates the subjective inclination as opposed to a consent to the Divine order. They wished to *rejoice* while they ought to have been led to repentance by the light, and to worthy preparation for the advent of the Saviour.—The *πρὸς ὥραν* intimates that their joy in the light was only brief. At first, there went out to John, Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, Matt. iii. 5 ; but when they saw what was his real design, and were saluted as *γεννήματα ἔχιδνῶν*, etc., a strong hatred took the place of their rejoicing, and led at last to his being delivered up to Herod. The real reproach, however, is contained not in the *πρὸς ὥραν*, but in the *ἀγαλλιασθῆναι*, in that they misused the forerunner and preacher of repentance in order to promote their sweet dreams.—*In his light* : a part of the illumination brought by John, filled by the oil of the Holy Ghost, concerned the impending advent of the Messiah. This element they seized upon. They dreamed of freedom from Romish oppression, and of universal dominion, and did not consider that the Messiah must before all turn the energy of His righteousness against the house of God, and prove Himself primarily a consuming fire against the sin of the covenant-people.

Ver. 36. “But I have a greater witness than John : for the works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me.”—We have here the *second* witness which God the Father (the Other, in ver. 32) bore to Christ. It is designated as greater than John in his capacity as witness, which is here alone regarded,—therefore than the witness of John, because it is more palpable, and admits of less objection. For, regarded in themselves, all truly Divine testimonies are alike. We best perceive what Jesus means by *works* from Matt. xi. 4, 5. They are not exclusively *miracles*. It is, however, implied in the nature of the case, and in the character of those against whom this proof is urged, that the miracles occupy unconditionally the first place ; and this is denied by those only to whom such an emphasis on miracles in the Gospel of John would be inconvenient. That

miracles are especially meant, is implied even in the reference to the starting-point of the whole conflict, the miraculous healing at the pool of Bethesda. In vii. 21, “I have done one work, and ye all marvel,” the work is without doubt a miracle. The first place among the works is occupied by the raisings from the dead, to which the words *καὶ νῦν ἔστι* contain a hint.—In no Gospel is so much weight laid on miracles as in the Gospel of John, or are there so many and emphatic declarations of Christ concerning the deep significance of His miracles: cf. x. 25, 32; xiv. 11; xv. 24. This strong emphasis presupposes that the Gospel of John bears the relation of a supplement to other representations, which give a particular account of these miracles. Otherwise John himself would not have needed to be so sparing in this respect.

Ver. 37. “And the Father Himself, who hath sent Me, hath borne witness of Me. Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape. 38. And ye have not His word abiding in you: for whom He hath sent, ye believe not.”—The witness of the Father can be no other than that which He bore, first, by John; secondly, by the works of Christ; and, thirdly, as is further amplified in what follows, in Old Testament prophecy. The expositors who imagine some other witness are left to mere guess work, and vacillate in uncertainty. The Father, moreover, was of necessity expressly mentioned also in respect of the *works* as He who bears witness, because otherwise it would not have been evident that the works are comprised in the witness announced in ver. 32. It is there the testimony of a *person* that was spoken of, but previously only the testimony of the works. We are led to the conjoint reference to John even by the Perfect *μεμαρτύρηκε*, in harmony with ver. 33, and in distinction from ver. 36. And in the case of John, the supplementary reference to God as the real author of the testimony was not less necessary than in that of the works. For in vers. 33–35 the testimony was designated only as that of John, and the *ἄλλος* in ver. 33 had therefore not yet received its full application. The words, *καὶ ὁ πέμψας—περὶ ἐμοῦ*, consequently form the conclusion with respect to the two first testimonies, and at the same time form the transition to the third and last, the presentation of which begins in ver. 39.—Before the Saviour passes to this third testimony, He points out, as it were parenthetically, the great loss of the Jews when they do not accept

the witness which the Father bears to the Son. With the Son the Father also disappears from them, for they never stood in a direct relation to the latter—the Old Testament passages, where a hearing and seeing of God are spoken of, refer not to the hidden God, but to His Revealer, who in Christ became incarnate; and when they reject Christ, the real Word of God, they thus lose at the same time the true possession of the word of God altogether. The Jews under the Old Dispensation had repeatedly heard the voice of God. It had spoken to them from Sinai, Ex. xx. 19; Deut. iv. 12, and through the medium of the prophets. They had likewise repeatedly seen His form, or a symbol of His presence. Of Jacob, the father of the race, it is said in Gen. xxxii. 30, “And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel; for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.” According to Ex. xxiv. 10, the elders saw the God of Israel; and according to Num. xii. 8, Moses beheld the similitude of God. God manifested Himself to the whole people under the similitude and symbol of fire. Cf. Deut. v. 4, “The LORD talked with you face to face in the Mount, out of the midst of the fire:” ver. 24, “And ye said, Behold, the LORD our God hath showed us His glory, and His greatness, and we have heard His voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth talk with men, and He liveth:” iv. 36, “Out of heaven He made thee to hear His voice, that He might instruct thee; and upon earth He showed thee His great fire; and Thou heardest His words out of the midst of the fire,”—passages which are to be compared the rather, since in them, as in our text, the *hearing* and *seeing* are immediately connected with each other. Isaiah further, in chap. v., sees the Lord sitting, therefore the *εἶδος* of the Lord; and Ezekiel also (chap. v.) beholds the glory of the Lord. All the Old Testament passages, however, refer not to God the Father, but to the Angel of the Lord, in whom the Logos is manifested in prelude to His incarnation. Cf. remarks on i. 18. Isaiah (xii. 41) saw the glory of Christ. When therefore the Jews do not accept the testimony of the Father to the Son, when they reject Christ, they thus dissolve all connection with God, and become *ἀθεοί ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ* no less than the heathen. Never having stood in immediate relation to God the Father, when they now wantonly destroy the medium of connection with Him, there is nothing

left to them but darkness, deception, and death, in which we see them buried even to the present day. If God be lost, all is lost. Moreover, by the rejection of Christ, they have not God's word abiding in them ; for Christ alone is the true and essential Word of God. Cf. on the Prologue. He who passes by Him, loses all real participation in the Divine word and revelation ; for to him are left only *disjecta membra*, broken and unintelligible sounds. The word of God cannot be immanent in such an one, cf. Col. iii. 16 ; for to him it can stand only in a purely external, inactive relation. A proof of the truth of this declaration of Christ is afforded by the character of the Jews from the time of Christ up to the present. They have an entire codex of the Divine revelations, and yet they have not the word of God abiding in them. Cf. 2 Cor. iii. 14–16. Judaism bears the character of that which has lost its savour, which always makes its appearance where the salt of the Divine word is wanting.—The whole passage stands in inseparable connection with i. 18, vi. 46, xiv. 6, Matt. xi. 27 ; and a criterion of the correctness of the exposition is furnished by its ability to bring these passages under one point of view. The profound significance of connection with Christ is everywhere prominent in them, because by it alone is there a medium of connection with the Father.—On the words, *τούτῳ ὑμεῖς οὐ πιστεύετε*, Lampe remarks : “*πιστεύειν εὑσ τινα* significat honorem soli Deo exhibendum. Sed *πιστεύειν τινὶ*, cum sit universalius, aliquando Deo, aliquando etiam hominibus convenit.” If they did not believe *Him*—which is an injury even to an honest man—how much less then *in Him* !

Ver. 39. “Search the Scriptures ; for in them ye think ye have eternal life : and they are they which testify of Me.”—On the proof derived from the works, here follows the proof drawn from the miracles and prophecy of the Old Testament Scriptures. It is the third witness which the Other, ver. 32, has borne to Christ. The transition is made to this testimony at the conclusion of the parenthesis, in the reproach against the Jews, that they had not God's word abiding in them, which is perceived in this, that they were unable to recognise Christ in the Old Testament, where He is so clearly revealed. The expression, *έρευνάτε τὰς γραφὰς*, refers to Isa. xxxiv. 16 : “ Seek ye out of the Book of the LORD.” By the Book of the Lord is here designated, not merely the collected prophecies of Isaiah,

but the whole *complexus* of the sacred Scriptures, in which they were to be included,—the canon of the Lord, which was not yet closed at the time of the prophets, but was to be closed; so that the “Book of the LORD” exactly corresponds to “the Scriptures” here. On the ground of this prophetic passage, it was usual, as seems probable from vii. 52, to send an opponent to the Scriptures with an ἐρεύνησον. The *καὶ ἔκειναι*, etc., is the result which will follow, when the requisition ἐρευνᾶτε is complied with truly, and in the spirit of it. Instead of *καὶ* might have stood a *colon*. In the Old Testament passage likewise the result is appended, which will follow on the investigation: “Seek ye out of the Book of the LORD, and read; no one of these shall fail.”—The rendering of ἐρευνᾶτε as Indicative is opposed by the above passage, and by John vii. 52, which is dependent on it. It further allows to the Jews what cannot be allowed them in this connection, immediately after ver. 38, which forms the transition to our text, from the proof derived from the works to that drawn from the Scriptures. And then also we should expect *ἴμεις* before ἐρευνᾶτε, instead of before *δοκεῖτε*.—*Δοκεῖτε* does not indicate a mere opinion or fancy opposed to the truth (Rothe, Stud. u. Crit. 1860, 1, S. 67). As a ground for the ἐρευνᾶτε was not merely the fact that eternal life was contained in Holy Scripture, but also that the Jews acknowledged this, and were thus, from their own admission, in duty bound to comply with the requisition ἐρευνᾶτε: *ἴμεις* is emphatic. The Saviour must have shared in their conception, or He would not have based His demand upon it; for to make use of a mere *argumentum ad hominem* would have been unworthy of Him. But besides this, it is evident that Christ agrees with the Jews in the proposition that in the Scriptures they have life. The inspiration of the Scriptures and their having life are coincident; but inspiration is here taught in the most decided manner. Only by presupposing this could a Scripture testimony of Christ be spoken of—(such a testimony can come from God alone)—or could Moses write concerning Christ, ver. 46, or could it be a duty to believe in the writings of Moses, ver. 47.—The Old Testament is regarded primarily as containing the law. The law itself promises life to him who keeps it. Lev. xviii. 5 (cf. Rom. x. 5). It has life in it in so far that it is a lamp to the feet, and affords the true and infallible pattern of moral

conduct. The law is recognised most decidedly as bearing this character by our Lord and His Apostles. In Luke x. 25–27 the Lord answers the *νομικός* who comes to Him with the question, “Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” by asking in return what was written in the law on this point. The lawyer quotes as the sum of it, “Thou shalt love,” etc.; and the Lord answers, “Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.” When the Lord says that not one *ἰώτα* or *κεράτια* shall pass from the law; when Paul says, ὁ νόμος ἄγιος, καὶ ἡ ἐντολὴ ἀγία καὶ δικαία καὶ ἀγαθή, Rom. vii. 12; and when he speaks of ἡ ἐντολὴ ἡ εἰς ζωήν, ver. 10, it is implied that the Scriptures contain eternal life in so far that it can be offered in general by the law. But the law is not sufficient for eternal life. The direction must be added, as to where forgiveness for transgression and power for new obedience are to be found, or the pointing to Christ. But that with respect to these things also the Scriptures contain eternal life (cf. 2 Tim. iii. 15), Christ here teaches as emphatically as possible. He brings the severe reproach against the Jews, that they have no taste for this part of the Scriptures. The proposition, that we have eternal life in the Scriptures, is common to the Jews with Christ. They differ only in this, that the Jews supposed they had enough in the law, while Christ, together with the law, lays stress on the Gospel contained in the Scriptures.—In saying that the Scriptures testify of Him, the Lord refers to the whole range of the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. For here it is not Moses especially who is spoken of, but the Scriptures in general.

Ver. 40. “And ye will not come unto Me, that ye might have life”—*q.d.*, and yet, although the Scriptures speak so plainly, ye will not, etc. Allusion is made to Isa. lv., especially ver. 3, “Come unto Me—and your soul shall live;” the same passage to which our Lord also refers in iv. 10, 13, 14, vii. 37; Matt. xi. 28. Cf. Christology 2, S. 378 sq.

But why do the Jews reject the testimony of the Scriptures, which are so highly esteemed even by them? Why will they not, on the basis of this testimony, come to Christ that they may obtain life? Our Lord answers this question in vers. 41–44: it is because they seek not the praise of God, but the empty honour of men. This is the sad solution of the riddle. After this digression, the Lord returns in vers. 45–47 to the testimony

of the Scriptures. He especially sets before the Jews the testimony of Moses,—of him on whose authority (the fourth commandment) they had first brought the accusation against Him.

Vers. 41, 42. “I receive not honour from men. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.”—Jesus turns aside the reproach of ambition, which the Jews might, and indeed must, have brought against Him on the ground of the words, *οὐ θέλετε ἐλθεῖν πρός με*—the honour conferred by men can be of no consequence to the Son of God—He has the honour of the only-begotten of the Father, and is therefore raised above all other honour—He then brings against them the counter accusation that they have not the love of God in them, and therefore have not that which is laid down in their law as the foundation of all life and salvation. They manifest this want of love to God, in that they love not Him whom He has sent, of whom He has testified by His word and *works*, and who can say of Himself : He that seeth Me, seeth the Father. Want of love to God is still at the present day the deepest ground of diversion from Christ. Since ambition, or the taking of honour from men, has its ground in selfishness, or the want of love to God, Christ casts the accusation back from Himself upon those to whom it belongs. Grotius: “Emphasis est in illo *ὑμᾶς*. Qualem me putatis, vos tales estis.” Christ makes the charge not as a supposition, but on the ground of clear and certain knowledge, as He who knows all men, and knows what is in man, and before whom, as before God, all hearts are manifest.

Ver. 43. “I am come in My Father’s name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.”—The Lord proves His charge of the absence of love to God. John says, “He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?” Thus also they showed their want of the love of God, in that they did not recognise as such the visible image of the Father; and in the future they will show it still further, in their readiness to welcome him who, without a mission from above, places himself in the centre of their national life. The words, “I am come in My Father’s name, and ye receive Me not,” acquire their full significance and their profound earnestness only when their reference to Deut. xviii. 19 is perceived: “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words, which He

shall speak in My name, I will require it of him.” The Name of the Lord is His glory as historically manifested. Christ comes in the name of the Father; so that the latter, not the abstract God, but as historically revealed, is He who fills the consciousness and determines all things: cf. Matt. vii. 22; 1 Sam. xvii. 45; 2 Chron. xiv. 11.—The other comes in his own name, so that he is entirely sunk in himself, and the deeds and results proceeding from him. Why receive such an one? He who seeks his own, flatters and cajoles, refrains from all difficult requirements, demands no penitence or renunciation, because he well knows that in order to be able to live himself, he must let live. Salvation without repentance was, even under the Old Covenant, the watchword of the prophets out of their own heart. Bar-Cochba was wise enough to declare war against the hated Romans, instead of against bosom sins. How did Mahomet indulge the passions of his people, and how carefully did he avoid any conflict with the national spirit!

Ver. 44. “How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from the only God?”—To receive honour of another (Grotius: “plebs a primoribus, primores a plebe honorem venamini”) is represented here, as in xii. 42, 43, as one of the most dangerous enemies of salvation. The fear of a conflict with the spirit of the time, of losing a good name, and of that pining and withered appearance, which it seems must come, when one is not raised and borne up by the recognition of his fellow-men, must stifle again the germs of faith. Only that mind can believe heartily which is fixedly intent on gaining the Divine approbation, and troubles itself not at all concerning the praise and blame of the ungodly multitude. Intentness on obtaining honour from men is especially distinctive of faith in times when an ungodly spirit has seized with great power on the masses—as in the times of Jesus the pharisaic, and now the rationalistic and democratic spirit. It is evident how important this declaration is for our own times. The desire to receive honour from men is very deeply seated in our theology; and not to break with the spirit of the age, but to mediate with it, is one of its most pressing cares. This is the worm that eats at its root, the curse that weighs it down.—God is designated as the *Only*, in order to intimate His absolute glory, which shows the endeavour to find

honour elsewhere than with Him to be absolute folly. Cf. xvii. 3; Rom. xvi. 27; 1 Tim. vi. 15; Jude 4, 25. The unity of God is even in the Old Testament a designation of His absoluteness, as in Deut. vi. 4, "Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God is one Jehovah,"—an only Jehovah, who has not His equal. As in ver. 5, the commandment of unconditional love to Him is founded on the unity of God—cf. Mark xii. 29, 30, 32; for to the multiplicity of the heathen gods, and the limited powers of each, corresponds the division of the heart; and to the unity of God, on the other hand, the requirement of entire love, the love of the whole heart, and the whole soul, and all the powers,—so here the demand that the honour of God be preferred to that of others, and the charge against the Jews of receiving honour from one another, is also founded on this. In Job xxiii. 13 also, "But He is one, and who can turn Him?" the unity of God designates His absoluteness: He is almighty, because there are no other gods besides Him. If there is but one God, there is but One to be feared in heaven and earth, and but One to love.

Ver. 45. "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is that accuseth you, Moses, in whom ye trust."—The Lord had, in ver. 39, appealed against the Jews in general to the testimony of the Scriptures; here He meets them especially with the testimony of Moses, the revered lawgiver, on whose authority they had founded their accusation. *Moses, in whom ye trust*: it does not appear that the conception of a real intercession of Moses is here attributed to the Jews, but Moses is regarded as the representative of the law, which is meant substantially. Parallel with the trust in Moses is the supposition of having eternal life in the Scriptures, in ver. 39. We have the commentary in Rom. ii. 17–20; where to this trust in Moses corresponds the resting in the law as the certain representation of the will of God, the untroubled fountain of all knowledge and truth, and consequently a sure way to salvation.<sup>1</sup> The Perfect tense, remarks Lücke, denotes that this trust in Moses existed among the people from antiquity.

Ver. 46. "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have be-

<sup>1</sup> Lampe quotes a passage from Avoda Zara, fol. 2: "In futuro seculo Sanctus Benedictus allaturus est in gremio suo librum legis et dicturus: quicunque huic legi operam dedit, venire debet et tollere mercedem suam."

lieved Me : for he wrote of Me.”—Jesus had doubtless Deut. xviii. 15–19 principally in view. Cf. on i. 21, 46; Christol. 1, S. 114.

Ver. 47. “But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?”—The emphasis is not on *γράμμασι* and *ῥῆμασι*, but on *ἐκείνου* and *ἐμοῖς*. The antithesis is that of the ancient well established authority, and that now in process of formation. The discourse ends, like Ps. xciv., with “a question of hopelessness” (Meyer).

### CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. After these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, of Tiberias.”—Between the facts narrated in the previous chapter and those in the present, there is a period of nearly a whole year. According to v. 1, Jesus went up to Jerusalem to the Passover, and there healed an impotent man at the pool of Bethesda ; and *here* also, according to ver. 4, the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. The circumstance that John thus leaps over an entire year, indicates that he did not intend to write a complete Gospel, but only a supplement of previous accounts.<sup>1</sup>—To this result we are also led by the words, “Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee.” The starting-point of this journey cannot possibly have been Jerusalem, as Meyer, proceeding on the ground of an entire disconnection of this Gospel with the former Gospels, supposes,—showing in what difficulties such a disconnection is involved ; it must have been a place on the Galilean shore of the lake. The *πέραν* in ver. 25 corresponds to the *πέραν* here ; and Capernaum is especially indicated by the circumstance that the disciples return thither, ver. 17. And thither also the multitudes go to seek Jesus, for no other reason than because He was at home there. According to ver. 59, Christ holds a conversation with the people in the synagogue at Capernaum ; but it is not Capernaum that has been spoken of in the immediately preceding context in John. In chap. v. we find Jesus in Jerusalem ; and in John also Capernaum is not designated as the constant residence of Christ, His *iδία πόλις*, so that His return thither from Jerusalem is not understood as a matter of course.

<sup>1</sup> Bengel : “Hic multorum mensium historiam a ceteris Evangelistis petendam innuit Johannes.”

Capernaum has hitherto been mentioned only twice in John,—in ii. 12, when Jesus stays there a few days on His journey to the feast at Jerusalem; and in iv. 46, where Jesus is appealed to for help from Capernaum,—but any residence there is not spoken of.—We find ourselves involved in insurmountable difficulty, so long as we isolate the Gospel of John; but this difficulty vanishes, when, in harmony with antiquity, we perceive that he wrote only *paralipomena*. In Matt. iv. 13 it is related how that Jesus left Nazareth, and settled in Capernaum. In the three first Gospels the latter place is represented as His “own city,” Matt. ix. 1, to which He returns from all His journeys, Matt. viii. 5, xvii. 24, and which was exalted to heaven by being the peculiar abode of Him who came down from heaven. If we regard the four Gospels as a whole, it cannot be doubted that Capernaum was the starting-point of the journey; and then, too, it is understood as a matter of course, that Jesus returned thither from Jerusalem.

When Matthew first mentions the Lake of Gennesaret, he calls it “the Sea of Galilee,” and afterwards commonly, in reference to this passage, “the sea” (in xv. 29, once more ἡ θάλασσα τῆς Γαλιλαίας). The Galilean prefers to use the most stately expression for his national sea,—this being recommended also by the double symbolical action in which Jesus tested His miraculous power over the sea in a small compass on this lake. Matthew is followed by Mark. He calls the lake, when he first mentions it, ἡ θάλασσα τῆς Γαλιλαίας, i. 16; and afterwards usually ἡ θάλασσα; but in vii. 31, again τῆς Γαλιλαίας. Luke refrains from designating the lake as sea constantly, and therefore purposely. He has in v. 1, παρὰ τὴν λίμνην Γεννησαρέτ, and afterwards ἡ λίμνη, viii. 22, 23, 33. John here designates the lake first as the “Sea of Galilee,” in the interest of harmony with Matthew; and he then adds a second designation, “of Tiberias,” because this was the current name in foreign countries at the time when he wrote. In xxi. 1 he speaks merely of the Sea of Tiberias, showing that this was the name which was best known by his first readers, and that he here mentions the Sea of Galilee only in connection with his predecessors. The city of Tiberias, built by Antipas, and named after the Emperor Tiberius, was well known in the Gentile world. Even Pausanias knows the lake by the name of the

Lake of Tiberias, *λίμνη Τιβερίς*, and in Arabic it is called Bahr Tabarieh.—The chapter begins, in vers. 1–13, with the account of the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, with which is connected, in vers. 14–21, an account of the miracle on the sea following on the feeding. The parallels of the two accounts are Matt. xiv. 13–36, Mark vi. 30–36; and of the first alone, Luke ix. 10–17. John gives an account of three miracles in Judea, and three in Galilee: cf. on iv. 54. From the deep significance which he attributed to miracles, it was natural that he should give a particular account of a number of miracles, even though on the whole he referred, with respect to these, to the former Gospels, which had treated of them, with a special preference. That he communicates the account of these miracles not merely for the sake of the discourses connected with them, but as facts in which Christ's glory was manifested, and which served the general purpose of the Gospel, to show that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, is evident from the circumstance, that there were no extended discourses connected with the two first Galilean miracles. These two first miracles are certainly such as the first Evangelists pass by; and John, as it seems, selected them for this reason. That he makes up the number three by this particular miracle of feeding, and the miracle on the sea connected with it, which had been already treated in detail in the three first Gospels, seems to be occasioned not only by their pre-eminent greatness, but also because by this means a basis was obtained for the communication of the highly important discourses which were appended to the feeding, and of that which took place on the voyage across the lake, concerning which it is to be observed, that the immediately preceding miraculous displays formed a basis for the heavy claims which Jesus laid on the people in these discourses. But it must always be insisted on, that the miracle has an independent significance. And if we consider of what importance is the agreement of all four Gospels in so important a fact as the feeding, we shall have no hesitation in taking this to be a collateral object of John, to confirm the narrative of his predecessors,<sup>1</sup>—a confirmation which transcends its own sphere, and

<sup>1</sup> Bengel: “*Virorum 5000 cibatio unicum est inter baptismum et passionem Christi miraculum, quod Johannes una cum reliquis Evangelistis describit, narrationem eorum hoc ipso confirms.*”

indicates, that where John is silent, his silence is that of presupposition and acknowledgment, and that everywhere, where he has not made it his object to communicate something almost entirely new, his purpose is to supply to the former narratives subordinate circumstances, which are only appropriate to a detailed account.

Ver. 2. "And a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His miracles which He did on them that were diseased."—John, says Lampe, refers to the numerous miracles which Jesus had performed in this year after His return from Judea, and which for the most part had respect to the healing of the sick. Cf. Luke viii. 27 sq., and Matt. ix., especially ver. 35. He thus in these words presupposes and confirms the narrative of the earlier Evangelists.

Ver. 3. "And Jesus went up into the mountain, and there He sat with His disciples."—The article in *τὸ ὄρος* is generic, and the meaning is substantially the same as into *a* mountain, as Luther translates. Thus *τὸ ὄρος* occurs unquestionably several times in the first Gospels,—e.g., in Matt. v. 1, xiv. 23. The article is used as in *τὸ πλοῖον*, Matt. viii. 23; *τὸ τελώνιον*, Matt. ix. 9; *ἡ οἰκία*, Matt. ix. 28. The preference of Jesus for mountains is perceived from the first Gospels. They are a symbol of the elevation of the mind to God. The mind striving towards heaven loves to have the earth beneath the feet. From John we learn the locality only in general: a mountain on the eastern shore of the Lake of Tiberias. The more exact designation of the spot is given only by Luke, who says in ix. 10: *ὑπεχώρησε κατ' ιδίαν εἰς τόπον ἐρημον πόλεως καλουμένης Βηθσαϊδά*. This Bethsaida must be different from that occurring elsewhere in the Gospels, for it can be sought only on the eastern shore of the lake; and the name even, Fish-house, would lead us to expect a plurality of places so named. Bethsaida near Capernaum is never designated as a *city*,—it was, probably, merely the fishery-suburb of Capernaum. The designation, Bethsaida in Galilee, in John xii. 21, indicates the existence of another Bethsaida out of Galilee. In striking accordance with Luke, a second Bethsaida on the eastern shore is mentioned by Josephus and Pliny (in his Hist. Nat. 5, 15). Josephus says (De bello Jud. ii. 9, 1), that Philip built Julias in lower Gaulonitis; and also (in his Antiq. 18, 2, 1), that Philip made the village, *κώμη*,

Bethsaida into a *city*, and called it Julias. He did not merely grant it the privileges of a city, but also increased the population.—That Jesus was for some time alone with His disciples on the mountain, is evident from the fact, that He could hardly have ascended the mountain for any other object, and from the expression, “He departed *again* into a mountain,” vi. 15,—according to which, the mountain must have been the first time also a place of retirement. With this is connected the statement of Matt. xiv. 13, “When Jesus heard of it, He departed thence by ship into a desert place apart.” The word *ἀνεχώρησε*, which John here avoids, he supplies in ver. 15. Some time must have elapsed before the “multitudes,” who went by land (Matt. xiv. 13), followed Him. Much confusion has been caused by referring *ἐξελθών*, in Matt. xiv. 14, Mark vi. 34, to the disembarkation of Jesus from the ship, and thus intimating that the purpose of Jesus to go into retirement with His disciples was frustrated by the circumstance, that immediately on landing they found the multitude again before them. *Ἐξελθών* occurs in the first Gospels by no means pre-eminently of a ship, but with respect to the most various localities: cf. Matt. xiii. 1, xv. 21, xxiv. 1. We are to supply here, not, “from the desert place,”—for this is the designation of the whole region, cf. Matt. xiv. 15; Mark vi. 35; Luke ix. 12,—but, “from retirement.” When Jesus with His disciples came forth from His concealment, He found the multitude already before Him—*προῆλθον αὐτούς*, Mark vi. 33.

Ver. 4. “And the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.”—This remark cannot refer to the following of the multitude in ver. 2; for that this consisted of those who were on their way to the feast, there is not a word to show. The cause of their gathering together is expressly stated in ver. 2; and no other is needed, since this is perfectly sufficient, and the usual one. As little also can the remark have a chronological significance. John has, of course, had the chronology in view; but it is his manner to give such remarks in connection with the practical significance of the event concerned: cf. iv. 35, ii. 13, vii. 2, xi. 55; and there is therefore only one point of view left from which the remark may be regarded, *viz.*, that Christ is the anti-type of the Passover, the true Paschal Lamb. Christ has accordingly, in view of the approaching Passover, arranged the

feeding of the multitude with the purpose of connecting with it the discourses, the central-point of which is, that His flesh is meat indeed. Quesnel: "Since the Passover is nigh, He gives an emblem of the wondrous Passover which He is preparing for His Church for time and for eternity." In favour of this view is the analogy of the last Passover of Jesus, at which He so expressly points to Himself as the true Paschal Lamb. In answer to the question, "Can John really have intended this typical meaning?" it is sufficient to refer to xix. 36, where John at once refers that which is written concerning the paschal lamb to Christ; and it is less reasonable to claim that John must then have declared his meaning more plainly, since he is particularly fond of giving mysterious hints.—We have here the *third* Passover occurring during the ministry of Christ,—the first in ii. 13, the second in v. 1. This is the only Passover between the baptism of Jesus and His passion, to which He did not go up to Jerusalem. At the second, the Jews had gone so far as to seek to kill Him (v. 16, 18); and since His hour was not yet come, and it was not obligatory on Him as a religious duty to attend the Passover, He went out of the way of danger.

Ver. 5. "When Jesus then lifted up His eyes, and saw a great company come unto Him, He saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"—Jesus did not see the approaching multitude from the mountain, but after He had descended from the mountain to the shore of the lake, certainly to find there the multitude, to which He wished to show Himself as the Saviour. To this conclusion we are led by ver. 15, according to which Jesus, when the people sought to make Him a king, *departed again* into the mountain; so that this was a place of retirement on the first occasion also. Jesus was there alone with His disciples. This has been already said expressly by Matthew, according to whom, Jesus, ἐξελθών—coming forth from His solitude—saw a great multitude. According to ver. 22 in Matthew's account, Jesus, after the feeding, was on the shore of the lake with His disciples, and constrained them to get into a ship; and when He had dismissed the multitudes, He went up into a mountain apart to pray.—The narrative is here abridged, and must be supplemented from the first Gospels. John could make this abridgment because he reckoned on this supplementation; and it is

not his fault if some find a difficulty in it, because they misapprehend his relation to the three first Gospels, notwithstanding the hints which he has so plainly given. The necessity of the supplementation is evident even from the fact, that the ground for the feeding—"This is a desert place, and the time is now past," Matt. xiv. 15, Mark vi. 35—is wanting here. To the words, "When He saw a great company," here, correspond the words, "He saw a great multitude," in Matt. xiv. 14. To this must be added first, "He was moved with compassion towards them," and "He began to teach them many things," in Mark vi. 34, and "He spake unto them of the kingdom of God," in Luke ix. 11. Then follows, "And when it was evening, His disciples came to Him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals," Matt. xiv. 15. Then the account in vers. 16, 17 of Matthew is here given more in detail. While Jesus, in Matthew, speaks to the disciples in general, He has here to do with Philip and Andrew; but we are not to think of a contradiction to the first Gospels. It is merely what occurs between the seeing and the speaking which is passed over; and the speaking to the disciples, no less than that in the interval, was occasioned by the sight of the multitude.

Ver. 6. "And this He said to prove him: for He Himself knew what He would do."—Some empty the words of their meaning by the remark, that the proving here does not denote the trial of faith, but whether Philip had any useful information. But decidedly opposed to this is the usual conception of trial in the Scriptures. Lampe: "Jesus *proves* for the same object for which temptation is attributed to God in Gen. xxii. 1; Heb. xi. 17, in order that the secrets of the heart may be made manifest to the disciples themselves and to others." The meaning may be measured especially by 2 Cor. xiii. 5: ἐαντοὺς πειράζετε εἰ ἔστε ἐν τῇ πίστει,—according to which the degree of *faith* is ascertained by examination. Decisive also are the parallels from the Old Testament, to be spoken of presently, in which, before the commencement of the miraculous works of the Lord, doubt in His miraculous power is to manifest itself, in order that the latter may afterwards shine all the more brightly, and unbelief and little faith may be all the more

deeply put to shame. Even in the words of Jesus to Philip there is implied an evident insufficiency of human means to feed the multitude; and this is more distinctly stated in the account of Matthew, which this presupposes, where Jesus, on the request of His disciples—"This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves victuals,"—says: "They need not depart; give ye them to eat;" to which are suitably added His words to Philip: "(But) whence shall we buy bread?" (the *ἀγοράσωμεν* in opposition to the *ἀγοράσωσιν ἑαυτοῖς* of the disciples.) If it was thus fixed that Jesus would be the host, in view of the manifest insufficiency of natural means, the thought of a miraculous feeding was very natural to those who had living faith, especially since similar facts had already occurred, as the changing of the water into wine, and since they had before them the miraculous feedings of the Old Testament. Quesnel, therefore, correctly places the object of the temptation in this, "to free us from too low and human conceptions of His omnipotence."—Why does Jesus apply to Philip? He did not address the three most advanced disciples, because by these an answer might have been given which would not correspond to the object of the question, by which the character of human nature was to be brought to light. Among the rest Philip occupied a somewhat prominent position. He was called soon after the three first, i. 43; and is also mentioned several times elsewhere in John's Gospel, i. 46-49, xii. 21, 22, xiv. 8, 9.

Ver. 7. "Philip answered Him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little." Philip does not stand the testing. Not a thought occurs to him of miraculous assistance.—Vers. 8, 9. "One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto Him, There is a lad here, who has five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?" Andrew seconds Philip. There are traces elsewhere, also, of an intimate connection between the two (cf. on i. 44, 45); for Mark (iii. 18) places them in immediate connection in the list of Apostles; and in John xii. 22, Philip communicates the desire of the Greeks to see Jesus to Andrew, and they go together to Jesus. Andrew is designated as the brother of Simon Peter in i. 41, exactly as in our text, but in xii. 12 merely as Andrew.—In

Matt. xiv. 17 it is said, “We have here,” etc. In Mark vi. 38, Jesus says, “How many loaves have ye? go and see.” The disciples inform themselves on this point, and then say, “Five loaves and two fishes.” From this it is probable that the bread was in the hands of others, for the disciples would certainly have known the extent of their own scanty store. That which is hinted at by Mark is expressly recorded by John. The Apostles *had* the five loaves and two fishes only in so far that they were to be had. From the manner in which Andrew speaks of the boy, he had no connection with the Apostles, but had followed the multitude in order to make a little gain.—The apparently superfluous *εν*, which is hence sometimes omitted, is used for the same reason as the diminutive *παταδάριον*, to call attention to the insufficiency of the means. What one small boy can carry, must, as a matter of course, and without specification, be regarded as insufficient.—The five loaves are common to all the Evangelists, as well as the two fishes; but it is peculiar to John that the loaves were of barley bread. Each of the four Evangelists has such peculiar traits, in proof that none of them has merely drawn from his predecessors. Barley bread occurs in Judges vii. 13 as the poorest kind of bread (cf. Studer on this passage); and likewise in 2 Kings vii. 1, Ezek. iv. 12. The fishes are to be understood as already prepared. *Οψάριον*, that which is eaten with bread, as a relish, occurs of fishes only in John—here, and in xxi. 9, 10, 13. It is an usage of language in which the only fisherman among the Evangelists may be recognised, even as Amos, the husbandman, by his picture of rural objects. Fish forms the usual relish of fishermen, as we see in chap. xxi.

Ver. 10. “And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.”—The number is the same in all the four Gospels, and the *ώστει*, “about,” is also added by Matthew and Luke. The mention of the *ἀνδρες* as sitting down, in distinction from the *ἀνθρώπους* in the direction of the Lord, has light thrown upon it by the addition of Matt. xiv. 21: *beside women and children* (Mark, vi. 44, and Luke, ix. 14, have merely *ἀνδρες*). The men only were numbered, but the women and children also seated themselves, as is shown by the direction of the Lord.—The *grass* is mentioned by Matthew

and Mark. Matthew says that Jesus commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass. Mark mentions the *green* grass, which plainly shows how little right we have to attribute to Mark, who loves to communicate such slight features, a mere compilation not derived from an eye-witness. The mention of the green grass coincides with the indication of the time here in ver. 4. There is green grass in Palestine only in the early spring, for, as a rule, there is no rain from March to October (Von Raumer, S. 90). Robinson says: "During the summer the entire absence of rain soon destroys the fresh verdure of the fields, and gives the whole country an appearance of dryness and barrenness. The only thing that remains green is the foliage of the scattered fruit-trees, and sometimes also vineyards and millet-fields. The dark green of the broad fig leaves and of the millet is truly refreshing to the eye amid the general dryness."

Ver. 11. "And Jesus took the loaves; and when He had given thanks, He distributed to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would."—In Luther's translation there is a double deviation from the original text. The words, *τοῖς μαθηταῖς, οἵ δὲ μαθηταὶ*, which he translates with the rest, have been introduced into the text from Matthew. Luther also translates: *as much as he would*, according to a reading, *ἥθελεν*, which is not at all supported by the MSS.—Instead of *εὐχαριστήσας*, Matthew in xiv. 19 has *εὐλόγησε*, while at the second feeding in xv. 36 he gives *εὐχαριστήσας*, as here. The verbs are frequently used interchangeably. Mark, e.g., at the second feeding in viii. 6, 7, has *εὐχαριστήσας* for the loaves, and *εὐλογήσας* for the fishes. Matthew, in his account of the institution of the Supper, has *εὐλογήσας* in xxvi. 26 in respect of the bread, and of the cup, in ver. 27, *εὐχαριστήσας*, which Luke uses in xxii. 19 of the *bread*. Cf. also 1 Cor. xiv. 16. *Εὐλογεῖν* alone is used in such cases, as the interchange with *εὐχαριστεῖν* shows, in the sense of to praise and bless, corresponding to the Hebrew *רָבַב*, for *εὐλογεῖν τὸν Θεόν*. Luke i. 64, ii. 28, xxiv. 53. With this blessing upwards, however, is connected at the same time also a downward blessing, or a blessing on the use of the bread. This is indicated by *εὐλογήσεν αὐτούς* in Luke ix. 16, which cannot be a mere abbreviated expression for *He thanked God for them*: cf. Luke ii. 34, xxiv. 50; Mark x. 16, where it is said that Jesus blessed little children. The same connection

of blessing upwards and blessing downwards meets us in 1 Sam. ix. 13, where it is said of Samuel, “He doth bless the sacrifice, and afterwards they eat that be bidden.” We are led to the same result also by the nature of the case. The effective point of the miraculous increase must manifestly be contained in the εὐλογήσας or εὐχαριστήσας; and that the blessing virtue was in the thanksgiving, is distinctly intimated here in ver. 23. The prayer which is sure to be heard is expressed in the form of praise and thanksgiving. John xi. 41 is explanatory: ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἦρε τοὺς ὄφθαλμοὺς ἄνω, καὶ εἶπε· Πάτερ, εὐχαριστῶ σοι ὅτι ἤκουσάς μου. Here also the Lord expresses the request for a miraculous interposition in the form of thanksgiving. Jesus praises and gives thanks on occasion of the feeding, not as at the usual grace for meat, but because God has so wonderfully blessed the small provision. The same remark applies to the blessing and giving of thanks at the institution of the Supper, for here also it is the form in which the common food is changed into the supernatural. The expression of a request in the form of a thanksgiving which presupposes its being heard, is frequently used in the Old Testament. It was on this ground, e.g., that the thank-offerings, the מִנְלָשׁ, were at the same time precatory offerings,—the nation, to whom had been vouchsafed a revelation, having a God who hears prayer, and to whom they might approach in full confidence of being heard. Here, however, this form of thanksgiving had a special ground. Jesus, in the unity of His will with the Father’s, receives immediately that for which He prays, and may therefore always allow thanksgiving to take the place of prayer.—That Jesus distributed the bread through the intervention of the disciples was already known to us from Matthew (xiv. 19); and John represents that which was done by the disciples as done by Jesus, exactly as in iii. 22, cf. iv. 2. It is thus less probable that the increase took place in the hands of Jesus only, but the miraculous power passed over from Him to His instruments.—Augustine remarks: “majus miraculum est gubernatio totius mundi, quam saturatio quinque millium hominum de quinque panibus: et tamen hæc nemo miratur illud mirantur homines non quia majus est, sed quia rarum est.” But Augustine, with perfect correctness, points out, that we should turn our eyes from the outward result as such to the infinitely more important symbolical, prophetic

significance of the occurrence: “Non tamen sufficit hæc intueri in miraculis Christi. Interrogemus ipsa miracula, quid nobis loquantur de Christo: habent si intelligantur linguam suam. Nam quia ipse Christus verbum Dei est, etiam factum Verbi verbum nobis est.” Now this symbolical meaning we may thus determine, that Christ, whose peculiar mission it was to be a Saviour to the souls of men, yet possesses a miraculous power of spiritual nourishment for His people, and that in the desert of this life He miraculously preserves and spiritually provides for His Church, not excluding outward expedients, but only allowing them a subordinate value. It is, so to speak, in order, that those who by their own fault have not experienced in their heart this power of Christ of spiritual nourishment, and to whom He has not become the bread of life, should entertain doubts with respect to the outward feeding.

Ver. 12. “When they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.”—This command is given here only; the earlier accounts relate merely that the Apostles made the collection. The object of the command is given in the words of Jesus, *that nothing be lost*. The blessing which had come from the hands of God was not to be wantonly squandered. Frugality is a result and sign of gratitude. Yet this is not all; for the fact that all the Evangelists are so exact in their communication of the result of the collection, shows us that this had at the same time the object to bring to light the greatness of the miracle by which the Father sealed the Son, ver. 23.

Ver. 13. “Therefore they gathered together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above to them that had eaten.”—The remnants of the fishes are mentioned only by Mark, being considered by the others too insignificant to be mentioned; and even in Mark it is only the fragments of bread that are designated as κλάσματα. In respect of the bread he has κατέκλασε, in respect of the fishes ἐμέρισε, and in ver. 43—καὶ ἤραν κλασμάτων δώδεκα κοφίνους πλήρεις, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἰχθύων—the κλάσματα are evidently fragments of bread, in distinction from the remnants of the fishes. Twelve baskets are mentioned by all the Evangelists, in distinction from the seven baskets at the second feeding. The baskets were probably found among the multi-

tude, who had brought in them the provisions which they had already consumed. They were so frequently used by the Jews, that Martial (Epigr. 5, 17) calls the Jews in ridicule *cistiferos*. Since the five loaves with the two fishes, brought by the boy, probably formed the contents of one basket, that which was collected exceeded that which there was before the miracle about twelvefold. The accordance of the Evangelists and the great number of witnesses give this fact the greatest external authentication ; and coincident with it is the confirmation which it has received by the experience of the miraculous power of Christ in feeding His followers through the course of so many centuries.

We have now to cast a glance at the Old Testament types of this fact ; and first of all must be considered the type of the manna and quails, which, according to ver. 31, occurs also to the people. That the locality is here also the desert (*ἐρημός ἐστιν ὁ τόπος*, Matt. xiv. 15, Mark vi. 35) is not an accidental circumstance, but typifies the absolute helplessness of human nature. As Moses considers it absolutely impossible that the whole people should be provided with food, so our Lord purposely brings it about, that the Apostles express the same doubt, that thus may be manifest the character of human nature in its fallen state, and as it is always directed to earthly causes, and that the miracle may make the deeper impression from the contrast of the thought and the reality. In Num. xi. 17–20 the Lord expressed to Moses His purpose, in order to put to shame their murmuring, to give His people flesh to eat, and this for a whole month. Upon this Moses says in vers. 21, 22 : “The people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen ; and Thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them ? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them ?”—LXX. *καὶ ἀρκέσει αὐτοῖς*. Cf. here ver. 7. “And Jehovah said unto Moses,” it is said in ver. 23, “Is Jehovah’s hand waxed short ? thou shalt see now whether My word shall come to pass unto thee or not.” Christ does not take the position of Moses, but that of Jehovah. Precisely as Moses is related to Jehovah, are the disciples related to Christ, in whom the Angel of Jehovah, with whom Moses had intercourse, has appeared in the flesh and has come unto His own.

The weakness of the faith of Moses is enhanced in the unbelief of the people, of whom it is written in Ps. lxxviii. 19, 20, “Yea, they spake against God: they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold, He smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can He give bread also? can He provide flesh for His people?”—The manna also had a symbolical meaning. The object for which it was granted is thus stated in the Books of Moses himself, Deut. viii. 3, “That He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by all that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD.” By the manna, Israel is shown that God alone is his preserver, that the power of preserving does not inhere in bread, and that in all bodily and spiritual need he should look upwards for help.—As intermediate between the feeding in the wilderness and Christ’s feeding the multitude, are to be regarded the increase of the scanty store of meal and oil of the widow of Zarephath by Elijah, in 1 Kings xvii.; the increase of the widow’s oil by Elisha, in 2 Kings iv. 1-7; and the occurrence in 2 Kings iv. 42-44. A man of Baal-shalisha brings twenty loaves of barley to the man of God, and Elisha says unto his servant, “Give unto the people, that they may eat. And his servant said, What! should I set this before an hundred men? He said again, Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the Lord, *They shall eat and shall leave.* So he set before them, *and they did eat and left over*, according to the word of the LORD.” In reference to this fact, Christ gives the command: *συνναγάγετε τὰ περισσεύσαντα κλάσματα.* Elisha does not work the miracle, he only predicts it. Like Moses at the feeding in the wilderness, he is entirely passive; and Christ does not take his position, but that of Jehovah.

#### VERS. 14-21.

We have here the *second* seal by which the Father distinguishes the Son, the second miraculous act by which He proves His right to those high claims which He makes in the discourses which follow both the acts—claims which, though so great, can in view of the facts be regarded as mere assumptions only by the blindness of unbelief. The section has however, of course, together with this, its own independent significance. The fact

recorded in it has a symbolical and prophetic character, and contains a rich mine of encouragement for the Church.

The basis for the present symbolical action of our Lord is formed by Ps. cvii. 23–32 : “They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in many waters ; these see the works of the **LORD**, and His wonders in the deep. For He spake, and raised a stormy wind, which lifted up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths ; their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit’s end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet ; so He bringeth them to their desired haven. O that they would praise the **LORD** for His goodness, and His wonderful works to the children of men ! Let them exalt Him also in the congregation of the people, and praise Him in the assembly of the elders.”

According to many expositors, this Psalm portrays the continual course of Divine providence, the deliverances which God vouchsafes to the various classes of sufferers ; and we should consequently understand the above section of sea-farers in the ordinary sense. But the beginning of the Psalm is decisive against this ; the historical occasion of it being there expressly and purposely stated. According to vers. 2 and 3, it is to be sung by “the redeemed of the **LORD**, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy ; and gathered them out of all lands, from the rising and from the setting, from the north and from the sea.” Such a situation occurs but once in the history of Israel. Under the Old Dispensation there was but one great national dispersion, that prophesied in Jer. xv. 4 : “And I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth ;” and but one great national gathering, that from the Babylonian captivity. If the Psalm refers to this, it celebrates the favour of the restoration of the people from captivity ; and it is established that this whole section has a figurative character, the Lord’s chosen people delivered from captivity being represented under the figure of sea-farers, who by Divine grace have been enabled to withstand a great storm at sea, and to arrive at their destined haven. The deliverance of the Lord’s people is in

this Psalm celebrated in a series, or, so to speak, in a row of varying pictures, of those who wandered hungry and thirsty in the desert, and are now suddenly brought to an inhabited city—of those who were bound in dark prisons, but are now liberated—of those who were sick unto death, but are now restored; and, finally, in this section, of those who have successfully encountered a great storm at sea.

The sea is in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments a symbol of the world. Daniel, in chap. vii., beholds four great beasts come up from the sea, all different from each other, which were the empires of the world following one upon the other. In the Apocalypse (xiii. 1) it is said, “And I saw a beast rise up out of the sea,” *i.e.*, a king rise up in the world. The point of comparison is in the first place their *massiveness*. And then the constant unrest, in which the mass of the nations is like the sea, as Isaiah (lvii. 20) says of the ungodly, the citizens of the kingdom of this world, “They are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest.” In Ps. xlvi. 3 the principle of this unrest is represented as being pride, which, not content with the lot appointed by God, is continually seeking to excel others, and to usurp all to itself. And, finally, another point of comparison is the *wild roaring* which takes place from time to time, especially against the kingdom of God. “The waters therefore roar, are troubled,” it is said of the spiritual sea of the world in Ps. xlvi.; and in Ps. xciii. the Lord, in His calm omnipotent majesty, is opposed to the sea of the world raging against the Church. “The floods lift up, O LORD, the floods lift up their voice. The LORD on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, the mighty waves of the sea.”

Believers who are in the world are represented under the figure of those who voyage on the sea, and do business there as mariners, tradesmen, or fishermen. This is to indicate that their lot is a very exposed one. There is no calling more dangerous, or which so forcibly points upwards, as that of the seaman.—The ships, “since many people are there brought together, having all the same object, danger, interest, and injury,” denote, in the symbolical language of Scripture, *communities*. In Isa. xxxiii. 21, 23, the ships signify states. Likewise also in Rev. viii. 9, where, in the prediction of a great catastrophe which should devastate the world, it is said, “And the third

part of the creatures which were in the sea (the sea of the world, meaning *men*) and had life died, and the third part of the ships were destroyed.” Here the ships are the symbol of the Church of God : and likewise in our Lord’s symbolical actions, which are based on the passage in the Psalms, the ship denotes the Church, which was of old collected in the ark. “ We are all,” says Augustine, “ in the ship. Some labour, others are only passengers ; but all together suffer danger in the storm, and are delivered in the haven.”

The *winds* in Scripture denote the sufferings and temptations appointed by God. Job, in ix. 17, complains of God that He breaks him with a tempest, and multiplies his wounds without cause. In Ps. ciii. 16 it is said, “ For the wind passeth over him, and he is not, and his place knoweth him no more.” The wind is meant of sufferings, afflictions, diseases, which assail feeble mortals. In 1 Kings xix. 11, the great and strong wind, rending the mountains, and breaking in pieces the rocks before the Lord, denotes the storm of temptations and afflictions which came upon the Church, and its representative the prophet, and to which at last even his rock-like nature threatened to succumb. The strong storm from the north in Ezek. i. 4 typifies the Chaldean catastrophe. The winds which in Matt. vii. 25 blow and beat upon the house, are an emblem of the temptations by which faith is exercised, and the solidity of the spiritual house is put to the proof. In Rev. vii. 1, four angels stand on the four corners of the earth, and hold the four winds of the earth, that no wind blow upon the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree, to intimate that all afflictions come from the hand of God, and that it is He who withholds them, and sends them when they come to pass.

“ He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still :” this is the happy issue which is ever granted to the Church of God on earth ; this is its great privilege above the world, on which the destroying storms of Divine judgment so often break, because it will not cry unto the Lord in its distresses, and because no thanks are to be expected from it after its deliverance. The times of quiet and refreshing are represented under the figure of a calm after a storm also in 1 Kings xix. The storm, earthquake, and fire, in which the Lord is not, are an emblem of the heavy afflictions in which the Lord

conceals Himself from the Church, whose representative the prophet is to be considered ; as Job so often complains in his sufferings that the Lord is no longer with him, when he expresses the wish, “ Oh that I knew where I might find Him, might come to His seat !” as in Ps. xlvi. it is the Psalmist’s thorn of pain, that his enemies say unto him, “ Where is thy God ? ”—the still murmuring encourages the prophet : after severe temptations there is the loving help of the Lord.

Now, that which in the Psalm meets us as a figure, is here embodied by the Lord in a double symbolical action, the key and interpretation of which is given in the preceding figurative representation of the Psalm. It is a relation which occurs frequently elsewhere also. Even in the Old Testament the case is not infrequent, that what were only figures originally, were afterwards embodied by men of God in symbolical actions, inwardly or outwardly performed. Thus, e.g., the symbolical action which Jeremiah performs, when he receives the Lord’s commission : “ Take this wine-cup full of fury at My hand, and give of it to all the nations to whom I send thee, that they drink, stagger, and be mad, before the sword which I will send among them ” (Jer. xxv. 15, 16), is founded on Isa. li., where the Lord says : “ Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of His fury.—Behold, I have taken out of thy hand the cup of trembling ; thou shalt no more drink it again, *but I will put it into the hands of them that afflict thee.* ” The symbolical actions of Jeremiah are usually based on such a figure in one of the older prophets.<sup>1</sup> But in the New Testament our Lord’s symbolical actions are, as a rule, founded on the figures of the Old Testament. His entry into Jerusalem, e.g., embodies the word of Zechariah, “ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion ; shout, daughter of Jerusalem : behold, thy King cometh unto thee : He is just, and having salvation ; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a

<sup>1</sup> It was the case even among the false prophets, who were imitators of the true, that they embodied what were originally mere figures of speech in symbolical actions. The pseudo-prophet Zedekiah made himself horns of iron (1 Kings xxii. 11), and said to the king of Israel, “ Thus saith the LORD, With these shalt thou push Aram, until thou have consumed them.” In the blessing of Moses, in Deut. xxxiii. 17, it is said of Joseph : “ His horns are like buffaloes’ horns : with them he shall push the nations.”

colt the foal of an ass.” The expulsion of the buyers and sellers from the temple gives a visible representation of the word of Malachi, “The **LORD**, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, and the covenant-Angel whom ye desire; behold, He cometh, saith Jehovah Sabaoth;” and of Zechariah, “There shall no more be a Canaanite, a merchant (one of Canaan, of the traffickers’ sort, and not of Judah), in the house of the **LORD** of hosts.” The cursing of the fig-tree, finally, is founded on the declaration of Micah (vii. 1): “Woe is me! for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits—there is no cluster to eat: my soul desires the early figs,”—the meaning of which is expressed by the prophet himself in the words, “The good has disappeared from the land, and there is none upright among the children of men;” and then follows a threatening of judgment.

The shore of the Lake of Gennesaret, on both sides, had been already designated by Isaiah (viii. 23) as the principal scene of Christ’s activity, and we might expect that the lake itself would not be left unvisited. In a double symbolical action, performed at different times, it is represented as a type of the sea of this world.

The first of these actions is described in the section, Matt. viii. 23–27, to which Mark iv. 35–41 and Luke viii. 22–25 serve for a supplement. The occurrence typifies in the most significant manner the relation of Christ to His whole Church, and likewise to every individual soul. It is a prophetic act which is continually being fulfilled, and will be most gloriously verified at the end of days. Christ suffers His own to fall into manifold temptations. Often, by concealing His aid, He seems to sleep; but when little faith fancies it sees complete destruction palpably before it, and when it appears boundless folly even to hope, then He suddenly manifests His aid.

The fact, that our Lord has embodied the figure of the 107th Psalm the second time in a symbolical action, proves how very much He desired deeply to impress this conception on the hearts of His disciples. The manifold symbolical elements could not be completely brought out in one action, and a second is therefore added as a supplement. This event, which occurs at the time of Jesus’ last Passover but one, and therefore at a time when the passion of our Lord, and the closely connected

passion of believers in Him, already began to come into the foreground, is recorded by Matthew in xiv. 22-36, by Mark in vi. 45-56, and by John in this section. (Luke does not touch on it, doubtless, because he was unable to afford any supplementary particulars.)

Christ, who is the heart of all the three Gospels, leaves His disciples, who are on the unquiet sea of the world, threatened by the storms of temptation, and danger both inward and outward. He allows them to wait long for Him, but finally approaches, unrecognised at first by His disciples, and the danger vanishes.

This event is greatly enhanced in view of the former one. Then Christ was present in the ship, though asleep; but now He is absent. Then it was day; but now the darkness of night increases the danger and the fear. Christ's absence, and especially His stay on the mountain, during the danger of His disciples, and the night, are the two most peculiar features of the narrative.

Ver. 14. "Then these men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world."—*That Prophet* is the one foretold in Deut. xviii. (cf. on i. 21), and the words, "that should come into the world," refer to Mal. iii. 1 (cf. on i. 9). Even the conjoint reference to the passage, in which the Messiah is represented as the Lord of heaven, the heavenly King of the covenant-people, shows that the people did not regard the Messiah solely as a prophet, and that they thus designated Him because He had been so called in the original passage of the Books of Moses. That they had also in view the prophecies of the Old Testament, in which the Messiah is represented as King of Isarel (cf. on i. 49), is evident from the occasion which called forth the acknowledgment of Christ as the Messiah; for He had not fed the people as a prophet, but as a king: but especially from the fact, that, according to ver. 15, they wished to make Christ a king.

Ver. 15. "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by force, to make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone."—Calvin: "*Volebant Christum rapere, h. e. violento impetu regem quasi invitum facere volebant.*" He adds, "quare si probari illi cupimus, quum deferimus honorem, semper quid postulet spectandum

est." That the people wished to force Christ, shows that they had an obscure feeling of the incompatibility with His character of that ordinary royalty which they sought to impose upon Him. The omission of *πάλιν* in some critical aids is explained by the circumstance, that according to ver. 5, the first stay of Jesus on the mountain did not appear to be for the purpose of retirement. But we have already shown that this is mere appearance. The real object of the stay of Jesus on the mountain had been already stated by Matthew and Mark. After He had compelled the disciples, who could with difficulty part from their beloved Master, to embark alone, He had gone thither alone to *pray* for His disciples, that in the severe temptation to which He must expose them, their faith might not fail. The Church Fathers, especially Cyril and Augustine, already perceived in this withdrawal of Jesus to the mountain a prefiguration of His ascent into heaven, where He is at the right hand of God, and intercedes for His disciples, who are tossed about on the stormy sea of the world.<sup>1</sup>

Ver. 16. "And even was come, His disciples went down unto the sea, 17. And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum."—The necessary supplement is afforded by Matthew and Mark, from whom we learn that Jesus had *commanded* the disciples to cross the sea without Him. As He so rarely parted from His disciples, and as they were so unwilling to go alone (He was obliged to constrain them), He must have had important reasons for this; and what these were, we learn from the result. Their departure took place before Jesus retired to the mountain; for He does not dismiss the multitude till after the Apostles have embarked, and then He goes to the mountain. John tells us first what Jesus did in view of the popular attempt to make Him a king, and then turns to the disciples. The *όψια*, or latter part of the evening, cf. Matt. xiv. 15, 23, was also the time when Jesus withdrew to the mountain. But it is mentioned here first that even was now come, because this was of significance to the disciples. To the statement that even was come is afterwards added: "and it

<sup>1</sup> Augustine: "Quod ascendit relictis turbis solus Dominus orare in montem, mons ille alta cœlorum significat. Relictis enim turbis, solus Dominus post resurrectionem ascendit in cœlum et ibi interpellat pro nobis, sicut Apostolus dicit."

was now dark." It is under all circumstances a critical thing to embark on the deep without Jesus, but especially so when it is evening, and when the day has already declined, and the dark night is coming on with its dangers and fears.

"And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. 18. And the sea arose, by reason of a great wind that blew."—"It is well said," remarks Augustine, "that it was now dark, for Jesus was not yet come." This it really was that made darkness dark to them; for if they had had the Light of the world with them, night would have been turned into day. Augustine perceives in this darkness a type of the condition which, according to the Scripture, will begin when the end of the world is at hand. "The more the end of the world draws nigh, the more do errors increase,—the more do fears, unrighteousness, unbelief, increase."—The sea arose, by reason of a great wind. "They stood still more in danger," says Augustine, "from the doubt in their mind, than from being as to their bodies among the waves." The outward danger is described more particularly by Matthew. "But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves; for the wind was contrary." It is really said, that the ship was *tormented* by the waves,—that being transferred to the ship which was felt by those who were in it. Their condition was a hard one. The wind being contrary, they were obliged to row; and this was severe toil, which yet brought them little on their way. Mark, however, causes one ray of light to fall on this gloomy picture, when he tells us that Jesus, as He prayed on the mountain, *saw* them being thus troubled (ver. 48),—a trait which he doubtless received from Peter, who received it from his Master. By such seeing, Jesus made Himself known as He who once said: "I have seen the affliction of My people in Egypt," Ex. iii. 7; who also numbered the wanderings of David, and had all his tears in view, Ps. lvi. 8. Such a seeing of Jesus is guaranteed to the Church of all times, and especially in its deep distress at the end of days, by the fact, that the Son of man is at the same time the Lord of heaven. "He that hath formed the eye, shall He not see?" But this is not an idle seeing, it is the seeing of omnipotent love, which prepares help and brings it, when the time and hour have come which He has foreordained.

Ver. 19. "So when they had rowed about five and twenty

or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.”—The ἐληλακότες, “when they had rowed,” is in harmony with the account of Matthew, that the wind was against them; and requires this fact. John has mentioned only the strength of the wind. The statement, ἐφοβήθησαν, “they were afraid,” likewise needs to be supplemented from the earlier accounts. The circumstance that Jesus addresses them on the ground of their fear, presupposes that their fear was not merely an inward emotion, but in some way made itself known. Matthew and Mark expressly tell us so. The former to ἐταράχθησαν adds, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ φόβου ἔκραξαν. According to Matthew, the ship was in the midst of the sea, μέσον τῆς θαλάσσης. The more exact statement is given here, that they had rowed from twenty-five to thirty stadia. Josephus (Jewish War 3, 10, 7) makes the lake one hundred and forty stadia in length, and forty stadia in breadth. Robinson determines the greatest breadth of the lake to be about six English miles, but the breadth near Tiberias only five, which would correspond to the forty stadia. The ὡς added is characteristic. Lampe: “religiosorum sane testium est, nihil incertum etiam quoad minimas circumstantias ut certum definire.” The time of the coming of Jesus is more exactly stated by Matthew and Mark, according to whom Jesus came to the disciples on the sea at the fourth and last watch of the night, and therefore at the break of day. So long a time had Jesus passed in prayer, and the disciples in severe toil, distress, and anxiety! How often in the meanwhile had they called, “Watchman, is the night past?” It was the same watch of the night which is in Ex. xiv. 24 designated as the morning watch, when the LORD looked through the pillar of fire and cloud, and troubled the camp of the Egyptians, so that the Egyptians said: “Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians:” it was also the time when the waters returned and covered the horses and riders, with all the host of Pharaoh. It is appropriate to the symbolism of the whole event, that the distress lasts through the whole night, and deliverance comes at the morning dawn, which is the natural type of salvation; as also it was not accidental, in that case of old, that the sea returned at the dawn of the morning, nor that the resurrection of Christ, that great emblem of all salvation to the Church,

took place in the early morning, and occasion was given to the Church to sing,

“Welcome to me the darkest night,  
If there the Saviour’s presence bright  
Beam forth upon the soul dismayed,  
And say, ‘Tis I ! be not afraid !’”

The symbolism is the same when David sings, “Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning;” and further, “I will sing of Thy mercy in the morning;” and when the sons of Korah say from Zion, “God helpeth her at the morning dawn.”—Jesus shows His power over the sea, first, by walking upon it in spite of its raging billows. He follows in this the example of Jehovah, who once of old walked upon the sea, as the Psalmist says (Ps. lxxvii. 19), “Thy way was in the sea, and Thy path in many waters, and Thy footsteps were not known.” The symbolical meaning of this occurrence was rightly perceived already by Augustine: “Although this ship is troubled by the storms of temptation, it yet sees its Lord and God walk upon the heights of the sea,—that is, upon all the dominions of this world.” So also Von Chemnitz: “The Lord will redeem His people at the fourth watch of the night,—that is, at the end of time, when the night of this world is almost at an end. In the meanwhile, the raging sea, however much it may murmur under the footsteps of the Lord, is yet compelled, willingly or unwillingly, to bear Him; even as, however much the heights of this world and its powers may rise, yet our Head treads upon their head.” To walk upon the heights of the sea is represented in the Old Testament as the high privilege of God. “He alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the heights of the sea,” Job ix. 8. The fact that Jesus shares this privilege, shows that His Church may calmly, and with cheerful serenity, behold the raging of the sea.—The disciples were *afraid* when they saw Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship. Whence this fear, instead of the exultant joy which we might have expected? John does not himself answer this question, and therefore refers, as plainly as if he had expressly done so, to his predecessors, in whom we do find the answer. Mathew says: “And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, *It is a*

*spirit; and they cried out for fear.*" So also Mark. Apparitions were regarded as the heralds of impending destruction. It is significant, that the disciples at first mistook Christ, who came to put an end to all distress, for a harbinger of destruction. It reminds us that we are too shortsighted, and that often we do not measure appearances by the true standard; that our Saviour often comes in strange apparel; and that those very facts which seem to set immediate ruin before us, are frequently the heralds of approaching salvation, and that therefore we must be cautious about crying out for fear.

Ver. 20. "But He saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid. 21. Then they wished to take Him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went."—If, according to the error of our times, and contrary to the custom of universal antiquity, we tear asunder the Gospel of John from the earlier Gospels, there may certainly be some hesitation in supplying the circumstance that Jesus really came on board the vessel. But if John's presupposes the earlier narrative, he might content himself with intimating that afterwards the disciples desired to take Jesus into the ship. The statement, "*they wished,*" is opposed to their former fear, when Jesus drew nigh unto the ship: now they wished to take Him into the ship, and after they had done so, they were immediately at the land. A gross contradiction would be nowhere less in place than here, where all else is in harmony even to the minutest particular. The rendering, *they wished indeed to do this*, but it was rendered unnecessary, etc., etc., would be justified only if *but* stood in the place of *and*. The emblem also would have been entirely spoiled if Jesus had not entered the ship, for its central-point is the opposition of *without* and *within*. It was the peculiar revelation of Christ's glory, that the very moment that He stepped on board the ship the wind was calmed, so that in a brief time the short remaining space was traversed. We are not, in accordance with the other Gospels, to suppose any further miracle than the calming of the wind. The words of Ps. cvii.—"He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof were still. Then were they glad because they were quiet; so He brought them to their desired haven"—here received a new fulfilment, being embodied in a fact, which is at the same time a prophecy, and as such is rich in encouragement.

This, then, is the event, in so far as the Evangelists have it in common. The first Apostle of the Evangelists communicates another fact—the walking of Peter on the sea—which the others pass by, doubtless because he had fully imparted it, and there were no materials left to be gleaned. It comes between the word of Christ, “I am He, be not afraid,” and His coming on board the little vessel, which, though in itself so frail, became by His presence impregnable.

### VERSES 22-59

Give an account of the conversation of Jesus with the Jews, which followed on the feeding, and in which Jesus pointed to Himself as the true bread. This and the subsequent conversation with the Apostles, vers. 60-71, are peculiar to John.

Ver. 22. “The day following, when the people, which stood on the other side of the sea, saw that there was none other boat there, save one, and that Jesus went not with His disciples into the boat, but that His disciples were gone away alone; 23. (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias, nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks;) 24. When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither His disciples, they also took shipping, and came unto Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.”—The language is here somewhat involved, owing to the scantiness of the Evangelist’s account of all that which does not directly minister to edification. The narrative is to be thus arranged: One part of the people, on reflecting that Jesus had not gone with His disciples in the only ship there was (*ἐκεῖνο, εἰς δὲ ἐνέβησαν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ*, in ver. 22, is a good gloss), had been induced to remain, in the expectation that Jesus must return. On the following day, however, when they saw that neither was Jesus there, nor did His disciples come with the ships from Tiberias to fetch Him away, they made use of these ships to cross to Capernaum, in order to seek for Jesus there.—Ver. 24 cannot be a resumption of *ἴδων*, etc., in ver. 22; but the circumstances are here supplied which determined the people to depart, in opposition to those which had previously caused them to remain. The former intelligence was, in ver. 24, opposed and rendered unimportant by the new perception. For if, on the following day, neither Jesus nor

His disciples were there, it was to be concluded, that if He had not gone on the ship, he must have crossed in some other manner. "*Οτε οὖν εἶδεν* is not connected with *ἰδών*, but only with *τῇ ἐπαύριον—θαλάσσης*. From *ἰδών* to *ἀπῆλθον* we have the motive to *ἔστηκάς*: the people, who stood on the other side of the sea, seeing, *or*, because they saw. If we recognise this, we shall not feel tempted to take *ἰδών* in the sense of the Pluperfect.—The reading *εἶδεν*, or *εἶδον*, in ver. 22, was the result of an immature comparison with ver. 24, and does not give an appropriate sense. It refers the *seeing* to the following day, though it can belong only to the evening after the feeding, when they saw, namely, on the previous day; to which also we are led by the *ἥν*, the *συνεισῆλθε*, and the *ἀπῆλθον*.—The notice in ver. 23 serves a double purpose: first, as a ground for mentioning the absence of the disciples, who might have returned in these ships; and then for the statement, that *they also took shipping*. It is entirely confusing to assume the dependence of this sentence on *ὅτι* in ver. 22. The *ἰδών* refers to the perception of facts which pertained to the evening of the feeding; but, on the other hand, the ships did not arrive till the following day.—Why did the ships come from Tiberias? Probably to seek for Jesus on that side of the lake; and then it is explained why the use of these ships was so readily granted to the multitude, who brought them not to Tiberias, but to Capernaum. When they had heard the news that Jesus was probably in Capernaum, they directed their course thitherward.—It is not the great multitude which had been miraculously fed which is here spoken of, but those who had *remained* at the place of the feeding, in distinction from the certainly far larger number of those who had gone home, or into the villages round about, Mark vi. 36, in obedience to the direction of Christ, who had dismissed the multitudes, and thus formally declared to them, that He did not wish to have further intercourse with them at this place. Matt. xiv. 22, 23. The vessels from Tiberias could have taken only a relatively small part of the former great multitude. Those who had remained were certainly at least deeply moved, and were probably those from whom had proceeded the proposal to make Christ a king, even against His will. This proposal and their remaining proceeded from the same motive; and this remark is not without importance with

respect to what follows. The low views of those who made the proposal are not, in the absence of further indication, to be attributed to the whole number of those who were fed. The miracle itself presupposes that there were some who were able to understand it and to take it to heart. Jesus would, as it seems, have wasted His miraculous power, if what He says in ver. 26 applied to all the subjects of it. He would, in contradiction to His own words, have cast pearls before swine.

Ver. 25. "And when they had found Him on the other side of the sea, they said unto Him, Rabbi, when camest Thou hither?"—According to ver. 59, they found Jesus in the synagogue at Capernaum. But on the other side of the sea: this was what surprised them, and the question was as to the manner in which He crossed the sea.—The Jews speak six times, and Jesus answers six times, so that the conference is completed in the number twelve.—The question as to the time, is at the same time also a question as to the manner. If Jesus had come to Capernaum at the same time as His disciples, He must have done so in a miraculous manner; for they had seen that Jesus had not embarked with His disciples, and that there had been no other ship there. But they were interested in the manner, in so far as they hoped that the miraculous power therein made known might be exerted in furtherance, not indeed of the salvation of their souls, but of their worldly prosperity. He whom the Sea of Tiberias must obey, could not be withheld by the sea of nations, and would be an excellent king to feed His people. This perverse disposition of mind, which prompted the question, explains why Jesus did not give them any answer, but proceeded at once to speak of other things. If they had put the question in the interest of their immortal souls, in order to learn of the saving power which Jesus had for these, the question would not have remained unanswered. Jesus would have expressly told them what He now admits by His silence, that He had crossed the sea in a miraculous manner, and therefore possessed the power to sway the troubled sea of their lusts and passions, and to conduct the ship of the Church into the haven of eternal life. But as they now ask in the interest of their lusts, He leads their minds from the external to the internal, from the thought of earthly food and

outward prosperity to the true nourishment for the soul, that food of eternal life which had been typified by the outward food. Augustine: “Ille post miraculi sacramentum et sermonem infert, ut si fieri potest, qui pasti sunt pascantur, quorum satiavit panibus ventres, satiet et sermonibus mentes; sed si ciant.”<sup>1</sup>

Ver. 26. “Jesus answered them, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.”—The outward act of Jesus is an intimation of the powers and treasures which He possesses for the exercise of His peculiar calling—the impartation of eternal life, which is the only aim worthy of God’s people, and the only gift worthy of the true Saviour. He who does not in the miracles of Jesus see *signs* in this sense, but only the beginnings of an activity directed to outward earthly blessing, degrades at the same time both himself and the Saviour. Yet those Jews have still many associates in Christian lands, for it is temporal prosperity which most persons seek in Christ (Augustine: “Vix quæritur Jesus propter Jesum”); and when this is withheld, they are offended. While they eat bread and are satisfied, they are grateful and faithful; but when trial comes, and the temporal is taken from them, then they fall away. This is a deeply-seated fault of human nature.—Jesus here evinces Himself to be He who knows what is in man, ii. 24, 25. That He does not express psychological conjectures, but speaks as He who tries the hearts and the reins, is shown by the lively asseveration, ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν (cf. at i. 52), which recurs four times in this discourse, vers. 32, 47, 53, and always points to Jesus as He in whom we may place absolute confidence, because He speaks that which He knows, and testifies that which He has seen. Jesus here showed at the same time that He is unconditionally exalted above the people, and having nothing to seek from them, has no reason to flatter their perverse inclinations, to which course those are condemned who come in their own name.

Ver. 27. “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the

<sup>1</sup> Bengel: “Non respondet Jesus ad Judæorum quando: et sic sæpe in sermonibus ea, quæ series rerum et status animarum requirit, potius spectat, quam interpellationes loquentium alienas.”

Son of man shall give unto you: for Him hath the Father sealed, God."—As Jesus, when speaking to the woman of Samaria, passed over from the bodily to the spiritual water, so here He passes from the bodily to the spiritual bread. And so likewise here He designates Himself as the bread of life, as He had then designated Himself as the water of life. The meat which endures unto everlasting life here, corresponds to the water, which becomes a fountain springing up into everlasting life, in iv. 14.—The meat which the Son of man gives is, according to ver. 33, Himself. He gives the meat, by giving an interest in Himself.—The meat, in itself perishable, Matt. xv. 17, cannot afford imperishable well-being, and is therefore of subordinate importance; and on the same line with the perishable meat lies all that which serves for the furtherance of the earthly existence. Calvin: "Noverat hominum sensus terrenis curis devinctos teneri." Quesnel: "When we regard all worldly conditions, is it not true that we find there almost all men engaged solely in care for perishable food, or in thoughts of a still more perishable and vain happiness, as though it was for this that man had received life?"—That they are to labour for the higher food, and thus to gain it, shows that *faith*—in which the work, according to ver. 29, consists—is no pillow for idleness, but demands a greater spiritual energy than the performance of so-called good works. It is indolence which keeps so many from believing. They will not rouse themselves from their natural state, which by use has become dear to them; they have a great aversion to the earnestness of repentance, which is the foundation of all true faith; and they shun the effort to collect their scattered senses from the many to the one object of faith. How inseparable working and struggling are from faith, and how far from it is all dead passivity, was typified even in primitive times by the wrestling of Jacob. Faith is also represented as *work*, *ἔργον*, in opposition to all false quietism, in 1 Thess. i. 3, where the parallel *κόπος* serves for explanation; and in 2 Thess. i. 11 also Paul speaks of the *ἔργον πίστεως*. In Phil. ii. 12, he speaks of a *working* out of salvation.—We are not to conclude from the word *labour* that faith is a human work, in direct opposition to ver. 44, according to which no one can come to the Son except the Father draw him, and to ver. 65. The working is not performed independently, but in de-

pendence on God, who always grants the will and the accomplishment, Phil. ii. 13. There can be no thought of an independent working in the domain of that revelation which even on its first pages declares the essence of piety to consist in walking with God, and this to be the only means of resistance against the might of the deep corruption which has come upon human nature in consequence of the Fall : Gen. v. 24 and vi. 9.—Faith is not itself the meat, nor that which can nourish and refresh the soul,—this is Christ, ver. 35 ; His flesh and His blood, ver. 55,—but is only the precondition of the reception of the food, the praying hand stretched out to receive it.—The benefits of salvation to be afforded by Christ are represented under the figure of meat and drink in Isa. lv. 1, 2. The kernel of this salvation we learn from chap. liii. It is redemption and atonement by the Servant of God. Yet we are not to stop with this. It is rather the entire fulness of salvation in Christ which is designated, by which the hungry and thirsty soul is satisfied. The expression *labour* here, corresponds to the thrice repeated *come* and *buy* in Isa. lv. 1 : “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money : come ye, buy and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.” That the *coming* and *buying* take place by means of repentance, which is the indispensable condition of a participation in salvation, is shown by what follows : cf. vers. 6 and 7.—“Which the Son of man shall give unto you.” They are required to labour now for the meat ; and accordingly the future δώσει can refer only to the presupposition of the labour, and not to the passion and glorification of Christ : *q.d.*, which the Son of man shall give you at once, so soon as you have performed the requisition to labour by faith, and its ground-work repentance. Christ designates Himself as the Son of man in reference to the Divine glory which, according to the original passage in Daniel, was hidden behind His lowly human appearance. Cf. at i. 52. The fact of the human abasement of Christ formed a sharp contrast to the fact that He here represents Himself as the only bestower of the gift which is unto eternal life. Christ allows the contrast, but takes from it its strangeness by the reference to the prophecy of Daniel, in which the Son of man is at the same time the Lord from heaven.—“For Him hath the Father, God, sealed.” The expression, *to*

*seal*, occurred already in iii. 33, in the sense of *to confirm*. The seal of confirmation which the Father has impressed on the Son consists in the works, v. 36, which are so many signs. Christ is speaking to those who at the feeding of the five thousand had just been present at such a sealing, and who had also some knowledge of the miracle upon the sea, ver. 25. Luther: "The Father has hung His seal and bull on the Son.—As though He should say: See to it, that ye adhere stedfastly to this. If another teaching comes, which would feed thee eternally, but has not that seal and these letters as Christ has, be on thy guard against it."—To the Father is added ὁ Θεός, "to render more prominent the highest authority."

Ver. 28. "Then said they unto Him, What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"—In explanation of the works of God here, may serve the sacrifices of God in Ps. li. 19, which are those required by Him, and well-pleasing to Him; this being shown by the antithesis to ver. 17, and the parallelism: cf. the ways of God in ver. 13. In Jer. xlviij. 10, "Cursed is he that doeth the work of the Lord remissly," the work of the Lord is that required by Him, and therefore well-pleasing to Him. The answer of the Jews testifies, according to the correct remark of Olshausen, "plainly of a certain spiritual understanding." From the ἐργάζεσθε, *labour*, they rightly conclude that Jesus requires an effort on their part as the condition of obtaining the exalted good placed by Him in prospect. Those give too much meaning to the plural, who conclude from it that they at once thought of good works in the Jewish sense. They abstain from any judgment in reference to the more precise character of that which is to be done, wishing first only to learn what Christ understands by it. To work the works of God is a specific conception, just as the sacrifices of God in Ps. li. are specific, for only *one* sacrifice follows: "the sacrifices of God are a broken heart." They ask what they are to do in this case, in order to be able to respond to the general requisition to do what is well-pleasing to God. They might as well have asked, What in this case is the work of God which we are to work? Christ meets them with a simple answer to their question, and not a correction of it, as though one necessary work were opposed to their multiplicity of works. There is the less ground for such an opposition, since even the one work of faith com-

prises a multiplicity of acts and works ; so that the plural would not refer to the ordinary Jewish works, even if the generic character of the expression should be denied.

Ver. 29. “Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.”—Against those who hold that faith is here called a work of God, because it is effected by God, it has been already remarked by Lampe, that “the Jews had inquired concerning a work, which they wished to work.” What had not the Jews to do and to work in order to believe in Christ? What “great labour” (Luther sings in his sacramental hymn, “Jesus Christ our Saviour”—“Such mighty grace and favour the heart must seek oft with great labour”) was here imposed upon them? The Jew was obliged to break with ecclesiastical tradition, which presented before him a false image of the Messiah—with all the authorities, which had already at that time assumed a decided opposition to Christ—with public opinion, and with his own fleshly lusts—he must give the death-blow to his honour among men, and, what was the most difficult, to all dreams of his own excellence, and all claims to be, or to be able to do something, or to be of some account, of himself. (Calvin : “Fides nihil ad Deum affert, quin potius hominem vacuum et inopem sistit coram Deo, ut Christo ejusque gratia impleatur.”) Quesnel : “The law of works, which only puffs up, is now reduced to the single law of faith, which humbles a man, and takes from him all ground of boasting.”) This was a work above all other works, a struggle for life and death. Luther : “This is taught by trial and experience, that to depend on God’s word, so that the heart is not terrified by sin and death, but trusts and believes God, is a much severer and more difficult thing than the Carthusians or all the orders of monks.” To believe in Christ was to give up all on which the heart had hitherto depended, to tear out from it the dearest “possessions of the heart” (Job xvii. 11). The Jew lost the communion of his people (John xvi. 2), of his kindred (Matt. x. 35), of himself (Luke xiv. 26). To believe was to renounce all that he had, and to return to the same condition in which he had come into the world. The Pharisees were the straitest of sects, but the endless multiplicity of their demands weighs lighter than a feather against the *one* work which Christ requires.

Ver. 30. "They said therefore unto Him, What sign shovest Thou then, that we may see, and believe Thee ? what dost Thou work ? 31. Our fathers did eat manna in the desert ; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat."—The τι ἐργάζεται is the pointed Jewish answer to the ἐργάζεσθε. The Berleb. Bibel : "What dost Thou work ? Here they wished as it were to present again and give back to Christ the word *work* : We return it, and say, What dost Thou work ? So rude and insolent is man." The point would be less fine if they had added the σύ, which is only carried on from what precedes. They have comprehended the greatness and difficulty of the demand which Christ makes upon them. In order to be able to require so much, and to make upon us the demand to give up ourselves, Thou must do much greater works in proof of Thy authority than Thou hast yet done. Thou requirest infinitely more than Moses, and yet Moses did a much greater work. Thy feeding cannot compare with the miracle of the manna.—The Jews thought themselves very cunning in this requisition. They overlooked only one thing, that Christ's miracles were only *signs*, which were to point them to the majesty of His person. It was their own fault that they had no regard to this, the real miracle. If they had had eyes to see (Deut. xxix. 3), the manna of the desert, even in the unhistorical exaggerated representation of it which was then current (cf. the Book of Wisdom, and my essay, Misunderstandings with respect to the Manna, at the close of the treatise on Balaam), would have appeared to them as something very small when compared with the gift which was now offered them. For the very reason that Moses was nothing more than a poor frail man, he needed the stronger outward proofs that he was one sent of God.—By indirectly making the demand on Christ to outbid the manna, they at the same time lead the matter back, as it were, unremarked, and with supposed craftiness, to that domain from which Christ had driven it in ver. 26. They wish to cause him to be a Messiah in the Jewish sense, who cares for the body, and lets "eternal life" go.—Proceeding on the conception that the whole of the Old Testament is the word of God, it is of slight importance to ascertain where precisely the words quoted are to be found. The preference which is perceptible in the New Testament for such general forms of citation is always founded on this conception.—It is said in Ex. xvi. 4,

“ Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain *bread from heaven* for you ;” in xvi. 15, “ And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the LORD *gives* you to eat”—LXX. : οὗτος ὁ ἄρτος, δν ἔδωκε κύριος ὑμῖν φαγεῖν ; in Ps. lxxviii. 24, “ And He rained down manna upon them to eat, and *gave them* of the corn of heaven.” The Jews have in view all these passages together. As the quotation professes to be a verbal one, we are not to stop with the two former passages. The *αὐτοῖς* is from the Psalms. But we are not to stop merely with this, for it is not natural that the real fundamental passages should be left out of account. The highly emphatic words, *from heaven*, ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, form the antithesis to the common earthly bread which they had eaten on the day before. The Berleb. Bibel : “ From Moses we saw great signs from heaven, but from Thee only a little from earth.” In reference to this “ from heaven,” Jesus, as first pointed out by Bengel, says seven times in what follows, that He came down from heaven, vers. 32, 33, 38, 50, 51, 58, 62. It was an anachronism to require bread from heaven, while this bread, to which the former was related as the shadow to the substance—this bread, to eat which is eternal life—was already in their midst. “ So is it with an atheist,” remarks Quesnel, “ who demands proofs of the Deity, although every day he meets with miracles, which having continued from the beginning of the world in a certain order and regularity, which they never disown, are therefore only the more wonderful than passing miracles.”

Ver. 32. “ Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven ; but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.”—Moses had indeed given bread from heaven, but not *the* bread, *q.d.*, the true bread,—the bread, compared with which, all other bread from heaven is not regarded, being considered as not-bread.—The true bread forms the antithesis to the perishable meat, which gives nourishment only to the body. The soul is represented even in the Old Testament, first in Gen. xlix. 6, as the כבָבָר, the glory, the *pars melior* of man. Only that heavenly bread which nourishes this can be regarded as the true bread, of which the manna was prefigurative ; and it is folly to demand this after the appearance of the antitype.—When God is designated as the Father of Jesus Christ, it is implied in this, not less than in

the Present διδωσι in opposition to δέδωκε, that the feeding pertains to the present, and is in connection with the advent of Christ, or His epiphany, with which the proclamation of the Son by the Father is coincident, Matt. iii. 17.

Ver. 33. “For the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.”—We are not to interpunctuate after ὁ καταβαίνων ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, but must connect this, which is common to the heavenly bread of Mosaic times with Christ (it is said that the manna came down from heaven in Num. xi. 9, LXX.: κατέβαινε τὸ μάννα), with what follows, by which the new heavenly bread is distinguished from the old. We have the carrying out of the thought in vers. 49, 50.—That ὁ καταβαίνων does not refer directly to Christ, but to the bread, is evident even from the answer of the Jews, which presupposes that Jesus had not yet pronounced concerning the identity of the bread and His own person, which He does first in ver. 35, then in ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβαίνων in ver. 50, and ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς, vers. 41, 51. The participle Present also is opposed to the direct reference to Christ, for He has already come down from heaven; but the bread, the nourishing virtue proceeding from Him, comes down anew, whenever there are hearts capable of receiving it. Cf. the Future δώσει in ver. 27.—The whole world apart from Christ is represented as lying in death, in harmony with the declaration, “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die;” for in the whole wide universe, He is the only point whence life proceeds. Cf. the remarks on the words, “in Him was life,” of the Prologue. There is, perhaps, in the life-giving bread here a reference to the death-bringing food of yore. In view of our incapacity to raise ourselves to the heavenly source of all life, it is a great grace that the life has come down to us, and is thus brought within our reach. On the words, “and giveth life unto the world,” the Berleburger Bibel says, “There they got the true wide horizon before them. It was necessary to say this to the Jews, for they applied everything to their nation. Thus they must be introduced into God’s wider circle. Such a Messiah must be so for the whole world.”—Only the bread which gives life to the world, and imparts to all men a happy immortality, truly deserves the name of the bread of *God*, and not the manna, which only in a lower and imperfect sense is called in Ps. lxxviii.

25, “bread of the mighty,” bread from the region of the angels, or bread of heaven.

Ver. 34. “Then said they unto Him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.”—We have no reason, with some old expositors, to call this answer of the Jews an apple of Sodom. Even the address *kúprie* shows that they do not wish to mock, but are in earnest with their request. They do not know what this bread is in itself, but perceive thus much, that it must be something very glorious, and that Jesus sets before them something more exalted than the extolled manna of the desert.—The similarity of the answer of the Jews here to the answer of the Samaritan woman in iv. 15, is explained by the fact, that it is the same Jesus who draws forth both the one and the other answer. On both occasions He had placed in prospect a glorious good—there a precious drink, here a precious food,—and not until He had called forth the expression of desire for it, did He explain the connection of this good with His own person. The *πάντοτε* refers to the transient character of the feeding which Jesus had just granted, and reference is made to *πάντοτε* here by *πώποτε* in ver. 35.

Ver. 35. “And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.”—Luther: “These words should be written on the heart with golden letters, yea, with living letters (that would be better), so that every one might know where he should leave his soul, and where he was to go, when he should leave this world; or so that, when he went to bed, or rose in the morning, or did anything else, he might know this golden piece of art: Here in Christ stays my soul, so that I need not hunger nor thirst.” The bread of life is, according to ver. 33, the bread which gives life. There is nothing implied in the form of the expression that is inaccessible to the Jews. The good things of the Messianic kingdom had been already represented under the figure of a rich repast in Isa. xxv. 6, “And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things.” “They shall not hunger nor thirst,” it is said with respect to the times of Christ in Isa. xlix. 10. Cf. remarks on John iv. 14. In Isa. lv. the good things of Christ’s kingdom had been represented under the figure of a precious drink and a glorious feast: “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money:

come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. 2. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken, hearken unto Me, and eat ye good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.” To this passage, in which the Messianic salvation is represented as the only food which quenches hunger and thirst, the Lord distinctly refers, together with Isa. xlix. 10. By the reference to these passages the circumstance is explained, that to the declaration that they shall not hunger, which alone stands in relation to bread, it is added that they shall not thirst. From Isa. lv. are also taken the words, ὁ ἐρχόμενος πρός με: cf. ver. 3, “Incline your ear, and come unto Me: hear, and your soul shall live.” Even in ver. 1 of this original passage, solid food or bread is promised together with the drink, being implied by the exhortation, *eat*. To the words, οὐ μὴ πεινάσῃ, corresponds in the original passage, *שׁבָּר*, *buy*. The verb *שׁבָּר* does not signify to buy in general, but only that buying which procures the means of quieting the sense of hunger. Corn in Gen. xlvi. 19 is called *שׁבָּר*, because it breaks or stills hunger.—Calvin rightly emphasizes the words, “that cometh unto Me:” “neque enim quidquam incredulis prodest Christum esse panem vitae, quia vacui semper manent: sed tunc efficitur Christus panis noster, cum famelici ad eum accedimus ut nos impleat.”

Ver. 36. “But I said unto you, That ye also have seen Me, and believe not.”—The rendering of Meyer, “but I wish to tell you,” has no justification in New Testament usage. There can be no doubt that Jesus refers to some expression which had occurred in the present conversation, just as in ver. 65 He refers to a word which He had spoken in ver. 44; and this can be found only in ver. 26: “Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.” That this reproach amounts to that of unbelief is shown by ver. 29, where Jesus designates it as the task still to be performed by the Jews, that they should believe on Him; and by ver. 30, where the Jews concede the fact of their unbelief. What else was it but unbelief, when in that which had taken place, the healings of the sick and the feeding, they had perceived no *sign*, and when they had not been led by these to the recognition of that which was really essential in the appearance

of Christ? To believe is nothing else but to recognise this, to perceive in Christ the Son of God, the Saviour, and the Bestower of eternal life. He who regards Him only as one who can procure for him some advantages in this life, is still in unbelief.—This *seeing* of Jesus is shown, by comparison with ver. 26, to be not an ordinary seeing, which would form no contrast to their unbelief, but a seeing of Him in the exercise of His calling, and the full radiation of His Divine nature, as on the previous day, and at the feeding of the five thousand, when Jesus had taught, healed, and fed. By all these revelations of His character, which are continued in the Church, they had not been led to the knowledge of Him. These facts were to have been *signs* to them; but they had not been so, for how then could they have desired new and greater miracles from Christ? This desire shows that they had not yet penetrated into the miracle of His person.—In the previous verse it is the glorious benefits which are laid up in Christ for human need that are spoken of; but here, alas! the Jews are excluded from these by their unbelief. *To this is then added, in vers. 37–40, a further declaration concerning that which Christ vouchsafes to His followers, which is forfeited by unbelief, in which is also included an urgent invitation to renounce unbelief.* It treats at last of nothing less than the resurrection at the last day, and eternal life. Woe unto him who excludes himself from this by his unbelief.

Ver. 37. “All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me: and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”—Luther: “When the Lord says, Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out, He wishes in a gracious manner to image forth and portray Himself for us, in order that we may know how to regard Him. Thou art not to fear Him, or to think that He is an angry judge, who stands with a scourge behind the door, and wishes to judge thee or condemn thee; for He is the true Bishop of souls, a true teacher and a faithful pastor.” To the giving of the Father here (cf. ver. 65, x. 29, xvii. 12), corresponds the drawing of the Father in ver. 44. The Lord speaks the words, “All that the Father giveth Me shall come unto Me,” in view of the unbelief of so many, and to their shame. Unbelief thinks itself great, and imagines itself to be independent, and exalted above Christ, whom it refuses to acknowledge, whose claims it rejects, and on whom it sits in judgment. In opposition to this,

Christ discloses another point of view. All that the Father has given Him comes to Him; and none can come to Him except the Father has given it him. The chief reason why they do not come to Him, is not in their own will, but in a decretive act of God, which excludes them from Christ, and thus from the source of all salvation. There is no absolute predestination taught in this. The declaration, *Ye would not*, Matt. xxiii. 37, remains still in force. How else could Christ reckon to them their unbelief, as is the case throughout this discourse, as a moral offence? The decretive act of God is based on the position which they occupy. They shall not, only because they will not. But the relation is seen in quite a different light, and the pride of unbelief receives a powerful impulse, if this is represented as fate. These words, however, spoken certainly with the mildest accent, do not contain the main thought. This is contained rather in the words, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out," so certainly as in ver. 37–40 all has the object to present the glorious blessings which are laid up in Christ, and thus to allure some to faith in Him. The casting out is common to the discourses of Christ in John, cf. xv. 6, and in the first Gospels, cf. viii. 12, xxii. 13, Luke xiii. 28. It is founded on the comparison of the kingdom of God, or the Church of Christ, with a building, a dwelling-house, full of light and pleasantness, but without the dark night, into which he is thrust who is not agreeable to the lord of the house. The words, "I will in no wise cast out," refer here not merely to the first acceptance, but, as shown by vers. 39, 40 (cf. also x. 28), to constant support and protection.—Ver. 38. "For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. 39. And this is the will of Him who hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." With respect to the coming down of Christ from heaven, cf. remarks on iii. 13. Christ's opposing the will of Him that sent Him to His own will, is with reference to the error of the Jews, who wished to erect a wall of separation between Him and the Father. In opposition to them, He renders prominent the fact, that it is not merely His will, but at the same time that of the Father, that His own should become partakers of everlasting bliss. That ἀπόλλυμι stands here with the signification of *to lose*, is shown by com-

parison with xii. 25, xvii. 12, xviii. 9. Christ loses none of those whom the Father has given Him, because He preserves and guards them, xvii. 12, and allows none to pluck them out of His hand, x. 28. The resurrection at the last day is represented not as the whole, but as the completion, of the salvation which Christ imparts to His own. From the moment of their believing He is unto them the bread of life, and this life attains its perfection at the resurrection. (Bengel: "Hic finis est, ultra quem periculum nullum. Citeriora omnia præstat Salvator.") Calvin, however, with perfect correctness, points out, that the emphasis on the resurrection presupposes, that until it takes place, the life of all believers is in many ways still tainted with death. The words, ἀναστήσω αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ, form a kind of refrain. They recur again in vers. 40, 44, 54. The words in which Christ subjoins the final decision should be indelibly impressed on, and be as a goad, to all hearts. The resurrection is here used in an emphatic sense. The ἀνάστασις κρίσεως, v. 29, is left out of account, as a resurrection which is no resurrection. We have here one last day, on which at the same time the resurrection of all the members of Christ takes place. The doctrine of a double resurrection of the righteous is opposed to the words of Christ, and it has also the Apocalypse, when correctly understood, not in its favour, but in opposition to it.—Ver. 40. "For this is the will of My Father, that every one who seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." He who sees the Son, θεωρῶν, with the bodily eye during His appearance in the flesh, or with the eye of the spirit after He has ascended to heaven. The seeing is the precondition of faith. He who is to believe must necessarily have Christ placed before him. Faith, however, is not the necessary consequence of seeing; for we may see Christ, and yet not believe on Him, cf. ver. 36. "Eternal life" is that which makes the resurrection at the last day, which alone had been spoken of in ver. 39, so desirable. Although eternal life has its prelude even on this side the grave, cf. remarks on iii. 15, yet here, where it stands in immediate connection with the resurrection, it is only its full realization in the future which is to be understood. Cf. the ἀνάστασις ζωῆς in v. 29.

Ver. 41. "The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. 42. And

they said, Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that He saith, I came down from heaven?"—*Γογγύζειν* has the meaning of *to whisper* only in vii. 32, but elsewhere in the New Testament always the meaning of *to murmur*; and this meaning is recommended here by the unmistakeable connection of this passage with those passages of the Old Testament in which a murmuring, *γογγύζειν*, of the Jews is spoken of, in accordance with which, the word *ἐγόγγυζον* is to be regarded as provided, as it were, with quotation-marks. The Jews here verified, as the word intimates, their character as already known from the Old Testament. As they had before murmured against Jehovah, so now they murmur against Christ. Cf. Ex. xvi. 7-9, Num. xi. 1: *καὶ ἦν ὁ λαὸς γογγύζων πονηρὰ ἔναντι κυρίου*; xiv. 27, where God says to Moses and Aaron: *ἀ αὐτοῦ γογγύζουσιν ἔναντίον μου, τὴν γόγγυσιν τῶν νιῶν Ἰσραὴλ, ἦν ἐγόγγυσαν περὶ ὑμῶν ἀκήκοα.* Cf. Ps. cxi. 25, Wisdom xlvi. 7. 1 Cor. x. 10 indicates that the expression is taken from the Old Testament: *μηδὲ γογγύζετε, καθὼς καὶ τινες αὐτῶν ἐγόγγυσαν.*—We are not to suppose that here others came up, who were farther from Christ. The rising opposition is explained by the fact, that Christ now presents His claims more distinctly, at which those took offence who had been hitherto apparently well-disposed towards Him. They now first perceive what is His real design. And the circumstance that His opponents are here first designated as "the Jews" (cf. remarks on i. 19), is explained by the fact, that they now for the first time fully manifested that disposition which afterwards brought the Jews in a compact mass into opposition to the Christian Church.—The Jews understood the words of Christ perfectly well, *as generally in this conversation it is not a question of misunderstandings, but of the offence which is taken at the words of Christ as correctly understood.* They perceived that Christ, in His assertion of His having come down from heaven, ascribed to Himself a full participation in the Divine glory, and that on the ground of this glory He claimed an absolute superiority. This it was which roused their rebellious spirits. They would willingly have allowed Him the Messianic dignity, and even a certain divinity; but He was only to be the first among those in nature like Himself. His claim to be very God, and to be absolutely above them, was insufferable,

and moved them to withhold any acknowledgment from Christ. Was He not a “son of man” like them, and, besides this, of mean origin? The supposed fact of His descent from Joseph, and whatever else was connected with this, at which the people of Nazareth had already taken offence, appeared to them to be a convincing instance against such presumption. At this apparent fact they directed their constant gaze, and took away their eyes from beholding the works of Christ, such as had been done by no other, and this before their seeing eyes.—The Jews are here the representatives of the natural man, who is untouched by Divine grace. The words of Augustine point out the deepest ground of their opposition: “Panis quippe iste interioris hominis quærit esuriem: unde alio loco dicit: beati qui esuriunt et sitiunt justitiam, quoniam ipsi saturabuntur.” He whose heart is filled with pride, who does not feel his own misery, and who needs no Saviour, his whole nature must rebel when Christ meets him with the words, “I am the bread which came down from heaven.” Quesnel says, “The great truths confuse the weak, and render blind the wicked, while at the same time they console the humble children of God.—A great number of dogs, which tear to pieces the preachers of the truth, or of swine, which tread them under foot, may not hinder the lambs and the doves from being fed.”

Vers. 43, 44. “Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to Me, except the Father, who hath sent Me, draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”—The Jews thought that Jesus had given them offence by His intolerable assumption; but Jesus points out that the offence which they had taken, rests on an entirely different ground, *viz.*, that they have not been drawn by the Father to Him, and have thus remained in their corrupt state of nature, in the stupidity and blindness of the flesh, which is incapable of perceiving Divine things, or of entering into relation to them. (Calvin: “ideo non sapit, quia insipidum vobis est palatum.”) Where there is not this drawing of the Father, there arise of themselves various erroneous conceptions and offences. Would that, instead of murmuring, they would rather open their hearts (Augustine: “nondum traheris? ora ut traharis”), that the Father may draw them to the Son, and thus render them partakers of eternal life!—The drawing of the

Father is connected with subjective conditions; for if it were not so, this conversation with the Jews would have no object. The desire of the soul must meet the attractive influence, the feeling of one's own misery, the desire for redemption, the beseeching hand stretched out upwards. It is the fault of the Jews that they are not drawn, just as in Deut. xxix. 4 it is said, " Yet the L ORD hath not given you any heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day," not to excuse, but to accuse the Jews. With the heart as it is by nature, swollen with conceit and pride, they cannot draw near to Christ (Calvin : " opus esse nova mente et novo sensu"); it must be their aim to obtain a new heart, which can come only by the gift of God.—Lampe supposes, if it is certain that he who is drawn by the Father will attain to the resurrection, none can fall from grace. But if the commencement of the drawing is subjectively conditioned, its continuance also may be endangered by the ceasing of the subjective conditions.—It is said in xii. 32, " And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me," according to which, the drawing is also the work of the Son; and this is confirmed by ver. 46, here, according to which, there is no relation to the Father but that which is mediated by the Son. Even in the Old Testament passage, of which we are to speak presently, the drawing is attributed to the Messiah. It is attributed to the Father here, as the highest cause, for the reason that the Jews acknowledged the Father, and were labouring to raise a partition-wall between Christ and the Father.—The *drawing* is here, and in xii. 32, taken from Song of Solomon i. 4 : cf. my Commentary on the passage. There also the drawing designates an internal influence on the mind. There also the following is made absolutely dependent on the drawing : " Draw me, so will we run after Thee." The two passages are further based on those dependent on the original passage, Jer. xxxi. 3, Hos. xi. 4.—The words, ὁ πέμψας με, intimate the ground of the drawing : He who has sent Christ, must also lead susceptible hearts to Him.—The words, " And I will raise him up at the last day," indicate of what great importance it is to yield to the attraction of the Father. The great question is here pending concerning blessedness or perdition. The resurrection is here also that of the righteous. The other scarcely deserves the name, for it is only the completion of death.

Ver. 45. “It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every one therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me.”—That which Jesus had said of the necessity of a renewal of the heart from above, as the condition of a participation in the Messianic salvation (Augustine : “Quare hoc dixi, o Judæi ? Pater vos non docuit : quomodo potestis me agnoscere ?”), He proves from the writings of the Old Testament, the authority acknowledged by the Jews, and which He here presents as raised above all doubt.<sup>1</sup> —The declaration quoted pertains to one prophet only, Isaiah. The general formula of citation indicates that this individual case is only one link of a whole chain, or, as the Berleburger Bibel says, “The harmony of the prophets arises from the fact, that they all speak from one mouth.” As here the individual is generalized to an entire class, so elsewhere, in the phrases, γέγραπται, λέγει ἡ γραφή, etc., it is to the entire course of the sacred Scriptures : cf. xiii. 18, xvii. 12. When the prophets in general are mentioned, the attention is more withdrawn from the human instrument and directed to the heavenly Author, as for the same reason *the* prophet is frequently spoken of, with the omission of the proper name : cf., *ex. gr.*, Matt. i. 22, ii. 5, 15, xiii. 35. Entirely analogous is Acts xiii. 40, where *one* passage, Hab. i. 5, is quoted with the formula, τὸ εἰρημένον ἐν τοῖς προφήταις, and likewise Acts vii. 42.—In Isa. liv. 13 it is said, “And all thy sons (O Zion) shall be taught of the LORD.” There can be no doubt as to what is the principal subject of the instruction. The central-point of prophetic prediction in the second part is formed by the advent and the atoning sufferings of the Servant of God. The real classical passage, the climax of the second part, is formed by the immediately preceding

<sup>1</sup> Lampe : “Maximum honorem Scripturæ V. T. Servator exhibet, dum toties ad eam provocat. Hoc pacto enim se ipsum totamque doctrinam suam, quamvis e cœlo descendisset, subjicit testimonio scripturæ tanquam lapidi Lydio, secundum quem de veritate prædicationis suæ volebat judicium formare. Ita ergo indicat doctrinæ suæ cum fide veteris ecclesiæ convenientiam suoque exemplo confirmat doctrinam in scriptura revelatum pro unica fidei norma esse agnoscendam.” This remark of Lampe suffices alone for the refutation of the entire essay of R. Rothe against the inspiration of the Old Testament. It is evident that the Lord would never have been able to take such a position towards the Old Testament, if He had not proceeded on the presupposition of its inspiration.

chap. liii., in which all the salvation of the world is made dependent on the atoning death of this Mediator. Chap. liv. stands in close connection with this chapter. It portrays the glory which should accrue to the people of God in consequence of the appearance of the Mediator. The LXX. translate : *καὶ πάντας τοὺς νιούς σου διδακτοὺς Θεοῦ*. They had already preceded in setting Θεοῦ instead of *κυρίου*. “Thy sons” is omitted here, because it did not come into account for the present purpose.—“Every man who hears and learns of the Father.” According to xvi. 13, it is the Holy Spirit who guides into all truth. The Father, however, works, as through the Son, so also through the Holy Spirit. From Him at last cometh every good gift, Jas. i. 17.

Ver. 46. “Not that any man hath seen the Father, save He which is of God, He hath seen the Father.”—Jesus had spoken in the foregoing verses of a drawing by the Father, and of a hearing and learning of the Father. Now this might easily be understood of an immediate relation to the Father, and then the mediation of Christ might seem to be superfluous. Christ here guards against this false apprehension. There is no other access to the Father but by the Son. He alone stands to the Father in an immediate relation. By communion with Him only can a relation to the Father be obtained : cf. remarks on i. 18, v. 38.—We are not to determine the sense thus : that the drawing of the Father, the hearing and the learning of Him, *proceeds no further than to lead to the Son*,—the *closer and deeper* relation to the Father can be obtained only by the Son. The drawing of the Father is also through the Son, and is mediated by Him, as is shown by the original passage, Song of Sol. i. 4, and John xii. 32. “Without Me ye can do nothing,” says Jesus in xv. 5. It would be in contradiction to John’s whole conception of Christ, and likewise also to the declaration of the Lord in Matt. xi. 27, if the first and fundamental access to Christ could be obtained without Christ, to whom *all things* are delivered by the Father.—There is no opposition here between *seeing* and *hearing*; but, together with all seeing that is not mediated by Christ, is also denied all immediate hearing, learning, and being drawn. The Lord indicates that He has spoken of the drawing of the Father, and the hearing and learning of Him, only in opposition to the character of human nature as

left to itself, which can never come to Him, and in whose bands the poor Jews lay bound, but not in opposition to the mediation to be granted by Him, which is always to be understood where a relation to the Father is treated of, whose operations are all performed through the Son.—Our verse forms at the same time the transition from vers. 44, 45, to the renewed declaration following in vers. 47–51, of the gifts and graces which are laid up in Christ for those who are hungering for salvation. Jesus is in this conversation always alike in the prominence He gives to the exceeding majesty of His own person, and so also the Jews in their attacks upon it.

Ver. 47. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.” The threefold repetition of the Amen with respect to the same subject is the less to be regarded as accidental, since even in the Old Testament the threefold repetition is frequently used for corroboration; *ex. gr.*, in Ezek. xxi. 32; Jer. vi. 3. Jesus first presents here that which He grants to His own in unfigurative language (cf. iii. 15); and then in the following verse recurs to the figure of bread, peculiar to this conversation. The way has already been prepared for what is here said in the preceding verse.—Ver. 48. “I am that bread of life.” The bread which gives life to the world, ver. 33.—Ver. 49. “Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.” Jesus admits what the Jews had said in ver. 31, “Our fathers did eat manna in the desert;” but He points out the unsatisfying nature of this gift by adding: “and—are dead!” This does not apply to the true bread, which has come into the world. For the death of the Christian is not to be called a death,—“death has become a sleep.” “Your fathers, He says, and not ours; and by this He shows that He has a more exalted origin than they thought,” ver. 42 (Bengel).—Ver. 51. “I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, (which I will give) for the life of the world.” That the words ὁ ζῶν have here their full meaning, and do not designate merely the personal bread in contrast to the material manna, is evident even from the declaration based upon them, “he shall live for ever,” and from ver. 57. This *living* nature

can be predicated in its full sense only of God, and Christ could ascribe it to Himself only on account of His community of essence with the Father. God is repeatedly called the Living even in the Old Testament: Num. xiv. 21; Deut. xxxii. 40; Josh. iii. 10. The living bread is at the same time that which bestows life, ver. 57. Jehovah is frequently designated the Living in the Old Testament, with reference to the quickening power which proceeds from Him to His people. On Ps. xviii. 46, "The Lord liveth," it was remarked in my Commentary, "The Lord is named living in contrast with the dead idols, who can do nothing, leave their own without support, given up to destruction. That David was living, showed that his God was also living. He is himself the living proof of *His* vitality." So also on Ps. xlvi. 2, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God :" "His God is not a phantom, which, itself dead, is also incapable of imparting life; He is the living, and consequently the life-giving: comp. the corresponding phrase, 'The God of my life,' in ver. 8, rich in salvation for His people."—Collateral with the declaration, If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever, is this, If any man eat not of this bread, he shall die eternally. Wherever there seems to be life without this eating, it is but a concealed death, and will in due time throw off its disguise. *Kai* ὁ ἄρτος δέ: *kai* intimates the connection of the thought to be expressed with what precedes; δέ, that it is not a mere repetition, but here takes a new turn. "Δέ—says Winer, Gram. 393—is frequently used, where only something new, other and different from what precedes, but not entirely opposite, is added." *Kai* here is not, as frequently, where it occurs in connection with δέ, *also*, but *and*; cf. *kai*—δέ in 1 John i. 3. Now that which is new here is, that Jesus, while He had hitherto spoken of Himself as the bread of life, and this indeed even at the beginning of the verse, now designates more particularly His flesh as the bread which He will give. It seems that in this He refers back to the occurrences of Mosaic times. Moses had given to his people flesh as well as bread: cf. Ps. lxxviii. 19. As the antitype, Christ in His own person gives both at the same time, the true bread and the true flesh.—The external authorities favour the omission of the words, ήν ἐγώ δώσω; and it is difficult to see how they came to be left out, if they formed a part of the original text. The addition, on the other hand,

might easily be occasioned by the circumstances, that the early readers could make nothing of the mere expression, *ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς*; that *ὑπέρ* occurs with respect to the atoning death of Christ in Luke xxii. 19, 20, *τὸ ὑπέρ ὑμῶν διδόμενον, τὸ ὑπέρ ὑμῶν ἐκχυνόμενον*, as also in John x. 11, 15, xi. 51, 52, and in many passages of the Epistles; and that, from a false apprehension of the first *δώσω*, and in untimely comparison of passages like Matt. xx. 28, Gal. i. 4, they thought that this atoning death must be meant.—The words, *ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς*, need no supplementation. They form a clause in apposition, which states the object for which Jesus gives His flesh as bread: *ὑπέρ, in the interest of, for.* Winer, Gramm. S. 342. We have the commentary immediately afterwards in vers. 53, 54, 57, 58, where life is represented as absolutely dependent on the eating of Christ's flesh.—But even if we allow the additional clause, *ἢν ἐγὼ δώσω*, to be genuine, we must not take it in the sense, that Jesus intimates that His flesh, before it can be offered for food, must first pass through the atoning death, or that only after the atoning death it will receive power to become the food of life; but we must understand *ἢν ἐγὼ δώσω* not of the sacrificial offering, but of the offering for food, so that the sense is entirely the same as if the words had been omitted: *q.d., And I will indeed give or dispense My flesh.* It is decisive in favour of the latter rendering of the words, if they are regarded as genuine, that in the following verses, where Christ carries out the thought here expressed, it is not His atoning death which is spoken of, but always the eating of the flesh, corresponding to the first *δώσω*, nowhere its offering. There is not the slightest hint, that the eating of the flesh pertains purely to the future, as must have been the case if the atoning death were made a condition of it; but everything leads to the conclusion, that Jesus invites the Jews to eat His flesh even in the present.—We may not say that even the first *δώσω* points to the future. *Δώσει* occurred even in ver. 27, because Jesus had to do with those who have not yet received the gift, and because the realization of the condition, the coming to Jesus, must precede the bestowment of the gift. But with this is interchanged in ver. 32 the Present *διδωσιν*, in order to indicate that the gift is even now to be had, and in ver. 33 the bread of God is designated as that which *gives, διδούς*, life to the world.—The Jews have certainly, in ver. 52, only the first *δώσω* in

view (or if at the same time the second, only in the sense of the first), to which they correctly supply *φαγεῖν*; for if bread or flesh is given, it is given only to be eaten. The thought that Jesus is speaking of a future feeding, which is to be rendered possible only by His death, does not once occur to these persons, who do not on this occasion misunderstand the words of Jesus, but oppose themselves to them as correctly understood. They ask, How *can* this man give us His flesh to eat?—The flesh of Christ is, according to i. 14, xvii. 2, 1 John iv. 2, His humanity. The flesh of Christ is, of course, not the cause of life in itself, but only as penetrated by the Divine essence. But this Divine essence alone could not have exercised the life-giving power, for the bridge of connection between it and the human race would have been wanting. Only Christ as *God-man* could be our Saviour.—The Jews took offence at the flesh; they were scandalized that a man like them should make such disproportionate demands; but it is this very flesh which gives life to the world. The same cause produced the offence and the life.—That which Christ here says of His flesh was prepared for in ver. 27, where it is the *Son of man* who gives the meat which endureth unto everlasting life. It was in opposition to the offence which the theanthropic nature of Christ gives to human thought, and especially to human inclination—in opposition to the pride, which cannot bear that a son of man should stand on an elevation absolutely unattainable by all others, and be absolutely different from them not in rank but in nature—and in opposition to the attempts which proceed from this source, to emphasize the impersonal divinity in Jesus only, and to represent this as the common good of all, and to render it prominent, as of great importance, that he cannot have the life who will not have His personal appearance,—that all salvation is connected with the historical God-man, the “historical Christ,”—and that there is here the representation of an idea, which is independent of the historical appearance; but that all life proceeds from an absolute self-surrender to this historical appearance as such, to which also those of the highest rank can stand in the relation only of recipients.—In the interest of the exclusive reference of these words to the Lord’s Supper, it has been maintained (Kahnis on the Supper, S. 125): “When Jesus first speaks of an enjoyment of His person, and then of an enjoyment of His

flesh, the latter is evidently meant to express a higher degree of communion than the former. Where Christ speaks of the enjoyment of His person, enjoyment is used metaphorically; but where He speaks of the enjoyment of His flesh, it is to be taken literally.” But it is decisive against such a view, that Christ everywhere speaks of that which could be realized in the present, that He requires the Jews to eat His flesh *now*, and that it is precisely this requisition which is refused by the Jews. Further, if such an opposition should exist between the enjoyment of Christ’s person and that of His flesh, how then could Christ, in ver. 57, return to the former, *ὅ τρώγων με ζήσεται?* The true connection is, that the words, “and the bread that I will give is My flesh,” determine more exactly where the nourishing and life-giving power in Christ is to be sought, *viz.*, that it is inseparably connected with His flesh, or His human appearance. This was perceived with perfect clearness even by Luther, who says, among other things, “Thou shalt know of no other God, nor Son of God, but He who was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man, as the Christian religion teaches. And if any wish to separate Him from God’s Son, and to raise a wall between God’s Son and the Son born of the Virgin Mary, do not receive such a preacher, and do not listen to him, but say, I know of no God or God’s Son, but Him of whom the Creed says: I believe in Jesus Christ, etc. If he is not the man who was born of Mary, I will not have him.—He wishes to anticipate these cavillers, and that our faith may depend and be fixed on the flesh and blood which they saw before them.—Reason says, Flesh is flesh, make of it what you will; you cannot make anything else of it. So also say the Sacramentarians. But open your eyes, give your heart and your ears to it, and make a distinction between flesh, and the word, My flesh. He who speaks is Christ; and in this Christ is full, complete divinity.—He did not wish to give His divinity merely, for this was impossible. For God has said, No man shall see Me and live; and thus it remains. God must therefore hide and veil Himself in order that we may be able to grasp and apprehend Him. He must conceal Himself in flesh and blood.—This text is a thunderbolt against the fanatics. (So Luther calls those who give the rein to their thoughts, instead of directing them in love and devotion to the historical appearance of Christ.) We

eat and drink His divinity in His human nature. He who thinks of God and seeks Him elsewhere than in this person, he has lost God and finds Him not, he wanders and loses Him; but he who seeks Him in the appointed way, meets with Him."

—That the eating of the flesh of Christ here refers to the believing appropriation of His theanthropic personality, is a point in which Luther and Calvin are agreed. The former says, "To eat and drink of His flesh, is firmly to believe on Him." With respect to the latter Lampe says, "*Calvini ejusque sequacium constans hæc sententia est, de manducatione solum spirituali in hoc loco agi.*" This declaration was formally sanctioned by the Formula Concordiæ. That the most natural sense can be no other than this, is evident from the fact, that this only could be accessible to those to whom Christ addressed the words, and that the requisition always appears as one that can be immediately complied with. But the two principal explanations,—that of the flesh of Christ to be given up to death, and thus prepared to be the food of life; and that of the Lord's Supper, which latter from the middle of the fourth century was almost universal among the Church Fathers (Lampe: "*Negari nequit Patrum maximum numerum nostrum locum de sacramentali manducatione intellexisse*"),—are not therefore to be entirely rejected. They are false only in so far as they are opposed to the first, which forms their starting-point and necessary basis. They have a firm point of support in the time when this conversation, together with the feeding on which it is based, occurred, and in the express reference to the significance of this time in ver. 4. If Christ, by giving His flesh to be eaten, is the antitype of the paschal lamb, the connection with His atoning death and with the Lord's Supper cannot be mistaken. Jesus already gave His flesh to His own to eat: he who approached Him in faith, could by accession to His theanthropic personality obtain the death of his lusts and passions, and be glorified in His image. To Christ, however, the further development of His destiny lay even then clearly exposed. He has already mentioned His death for the salvation of the world in ii. 19, and especially in iii. 14, 15. He speaks even in this discourse of His ascension to heaven, ver. 22, and of the betrayal of Judas, vers. 70, 71. If His flesh was to be prepared first by His death to be the food of life; if the corn of wheat

must fall first into the earth, xii. 24; if He must be lifted up from the earth, in order to draw all men unto Him, xii. 32; and if the offering of His flesh as a sin-offering is the condition of the perfect salvation of the world, cf. Rom. viii. 3,—the reference to His atoning death can be erroneous only when it is opposed to an immediate enjoyment of His flesh. Likewise, if it is established that in the Lord's Supper Christ grants to His own in a wonderful manner the enjoyment of Himself, this enjoyment must be included in the declaration so certainly, as here all that is spoken of by which the flesh of Christ is proved to be the life-food of the world, and as Christ, from His epiphany onwards, beheld with perfect clearness the whole of His work of redemption in all its particulars. Cf. the further discussion at ver. 53.

Ver. 52. “The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us His flesh to eat?”—They contended among themselves—some absolutely denying the ability of Christ to give His flesh to be eaten, others merely expressing doubt and hesitation; some in an unqualified manner condemning Him and accusing Him of blasphemy, others more or less excusing Him, or wishing to suspend their judgment.—The Jews understand Christ quite correctly, and the “Caper-naitic eating” is a mere fiction of the expositors. Those who had grown up in the school of the Old Testament, and were accustomed to its figurative language, must have easily adopted the figurative expression, to eat the flesh of Christ, for, to receive into one's self His theanthropic personality. We need only to refer to such forms of expression as “*eat up* my flesh,” in Ps. xxvii. 2, to denote enmity; and to passages like Prov. ix. 5, where Wisdom says, “Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I mingle.” If the offence were founded on a misunderstanding, Jesus would have given some intimation of this. The fact that, in the following verses, He repeats in the strongest manner the propositions which were offensive to the Jews, and that He dismisses a large number of those who had been His disciples hitherto, without making any attempt to remove the offence by an explanation, shows plainly that this offence was caused by the substance and not the form of the declaration. In the fact, however, that Jesus does not avoid this offence, and that, in view of the danger of dividing the

hitherto united band of His disciples, instead of breaking off the conversation, or directing it to other topics, He rather intentionally brings it to a point, we perceive that there must be here before us the cardinal point of Christianity, without which all the rest has no significance, and that the refusal to acknowledge in Jesus the absolutely central personality, is a fundamentally destructive error; so that nothing is lost in the departure of some because they cannot reconcile themselves to this, as is also implied in the highly emphatic assurance of Christ, that life can be attained solely and alone by the eating of His flesh.—The *οὗτος* is used contemptuously,—“the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know,” ver. 42,—and on this rests the emphasis. The offence is founded on the circumstance, that Jesus, to all appearance a mere man, and indeed a man who has not where to lay His head, and in whom all that the eye of the natural man can see is lowly, claims for Himself the right and the power to penetrate all others with His individuality, and so to impress His image upon them, that He is all, and there is nothing besides left to them. Christ’s apparently ascribing too much to Himself is the rock of offence throughout this conversation: cf. especially ver. 41. And from this proceeds the conflict between Him and the Jews almost throughout the Gospel of John; as, *ex. gr.*, in the preceding chapter, the point of controversy between the Jews and Jesus is this, that He πατέρα ἕδιον ἔλεγε τὸν Θεὸν, ὃσον ἔαυτὸν ποιῶν τῷ Θεῷ, v. 18, and as in viii. 53 the Jews ask, τίνα σεαυτὸν σὺ ποιεῖς; When Paul speaks of the σκάνδαλον τοῦ σταυροῦ (Gal. v. 11; 1 Cor. i. 23), the offence consists not in the death of Christ in itself, but rather in this, that a crucified one is said to be the power of God and the wisdom of God, 1 Cor. i. 24. In the dialogue with the Jew Trypho, the chief offence which the Jews took at Christianity is represented as this: “they could not reconcile themselves to the idea, that Christianity sets up a second God by the side of the Creator of the universe” (*Graul, The Christian Church on the threshold of the age of Irenæus*, Leipzic 1860, S. 64). The former messengers of God had directed the gaze of others away from themselves as weak and unworthy instruments; God alone was to be honoured, and He only was to be served. How retiring was Moses, the founder of the Old Covenant! He represents

himself in his work as a poor sinner, who, before entering on his calling, was under sentence on account of his neglecting the circumcision of his son, and at the end of his career was, on account of his sin, excluded from the promised land, and only permitted to see it afar off. To the reproach of presumption he answers, that no one in the world can think less of himself, Num. xii. 3. None of the earlier messengers of God had ever claimed that the people should eat his flesh, and that he should impress upon them absolutely the stamp of his own individuality. All had desired only the reception of their message. In this state of the case, the position of Jesus would have been an entirely untenable one, if the Father had not sealed Him, and if there had not been presented in His works the proof of the credibility of His assertion, that He stood in an absolutely unique relation to God. Those who deny or deprecate the miracle of the feeding, or of the walking on the sea, destroy the absolutely necessary foundation for the claims which Christ here puts forth. Only where there existed such a basis could it be urged upon the consciences of the Jews, who had not, as we have, the experience for centuries of the life-giving power proceeding from Christ, to acknowledge these claims of Christ.

Ver. 53. “Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.”—Jesus says, Verily, verily: He solemnly assured them, and confirmed it as by an oath, that life is only to be found where His flesh is eaten and His blood is drunk; and that all which elsewhere gives itself out to be life, is only a wretched pretence, a whitewashed sepulchre, which appears outwardly fair, but within is full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.—Stier remarks, “At the same time, the definite separation and juxtaposition of *flesh* and *blood* speaks in the most significant manner of that *death* of which ver. 51 testified (?), since only a perfect death entirely separates the flesh and blood.” But always where flesh and blood occur in connection in the New Testament, they constitute the living organism. So here in i. 13; Matt. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. xv. 50; Gal. i. 16; Eph. vi. 12, where the human nature is denoted by flesh and blood. In Heb. ii. 14, *flesh and blood* occurs of the human personality of Christ. *Flesh and blood* everywhere stands only

where *flesh* merely might have stood, by which is commonly designated the whole human being. The *σάρξ* is the whole, the blood the conspicuous part, the soul of the flesh, as it is represented in the Old Testament: Gen. ix. 4, “Flesh with its soul, its blood, ye shall not eat;” Lev. xvii. 14, “The soul of all flesh is its blood;” Deut. xii. 23. We are led to conclude that *αἷμα* is not primarily the blood shed, but that which is in the flesh, by the fact, that in the really principal declaration in ver. 51, which is here only confirmed anew against objections, it is only the eating of the flesh which is spoken of. To the same result we are led also by the Saviour’s omission of the drinking, again in vers. 57, 58. There can then be no doubt that here such an eating of the flesh and drinking of the blood is primarily spoken of, as needed not to wait for the death of Christ, but at once came to life, so soon as susceptible minds were found. To the corrupt flesh and blood of the natural man is here offered, in the holy flesh and blood of the Redeemer, a means of salvation, to the use and operation of which no other condition is attached but that of eating and drinking, or of faith. To this end the Logos became flesh, that His theanthropic personality might penetrate and ennable that of the common man.—This is what is primarily declared, and this is the sense in which the Jews took, and were expected to take, the words of Christ. But we are not to stop with this. Jesus, to whom the future was always manifest, cannot have spoken without some reference to the Supper, to be instituted a year later. The hint is too strong for it to be regarded as accidental. The denial of the connection with the Supper was on the whole prevalent in the Lutheran Church, but yet the Lutheran sacramental hymns are full of references to this chapter. When Jesus says, *λάβετε, φάγετε τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ σῶμά μου*, there is a striking accordance with the eating of the flesh here; and when He says, *πίετε ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες τοῦτο γάρ ἐστι τὸ αἷμά μου*, this cannot without violence be separated from *πίητε αὐτοῦ τὸ αἷμα*, or from *πίνων μου τὸ αἷμα*, in ver. 54. It must not be overlooked that John passes over the institution of the Supper; and it is therefore the more natural to suppose that he has it in view in communicating this discourse of Christ, just as there is a reference to baptism, the institution of which by the baptism of Christ is likewise passed over, in the conversation of Christ with Nicodemus, John

iii. 5. John wrote for those who had before them the accounts of the earlier Evangelists concerning the institution of the Supper, and who constantly celebrated it in the appointed manner. The necessary consequence, that they referred the present words of Christ to the Supper, must be regarded as purposed by John.—As the connection with the Supper, so also that with the atoning sufferings and death of Christ, presses itself forcibly upon our attention. The atoning blood of the Servant of God had been already represented in Isa. liii. as the central-point of the redemptive work. “So shall He sprinkle many heathens,” lii. 15; “by His wounds we are healed,” liii. 5; “His soul shall give restitution,” ver. 10; “because He hath poured out His soul unto death,” ver. 12. Even the Baptist represents Christ as the Lamb which taketh away sin by His blood. According to the declaration of Christ, the New Covenant is founded in the blood of Christ, which is shed for many, for the forgiveness of sins. The Apostles likewise represent the sacred body of Christ, which was given to death and made sin for us, and His atoning blood, as the central-point of the Christian faith. They attribute the same effect to the crucified Christ and His atoning blood, which is here ascribed to the eating of the flesh of the Son of man and the drinking of His blood: Rom. iii. 25, v. 9; Eph. ii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 19; 1 John i. 7; Rev. i. 5, v. 9, xii. 11.—A complete disconnection from the Supper and from Christ’s atoning death seems the more inappropriate, if we take into view the significant hint in ver. 4: “And the Passover was nigh.” If Jesus, in view of the Passover, speaks of the importance of eating His flesh and of the partaking of His blood as the condition of life, the thought is very natural, that He has in view the paschal lamb as an offering and a sacrament,—the more so, since Christ has been already represented as the antitype of the paschal lamb in i. 29; since in xix. 36, that which is said in the law of the paschal lamb is at once applied to Christ; and since Paul in 1 Cor. v. 7 designates Christ as our passover sacrificed for us, and Peter in 1 Pet. i. 19 calls Him the Lamb without blemish and without spot.—Now, how are we to reconcile the grounds which favour these apparently opposite views? Some means must be sought by which these views may be brought into harmony with each other. When Jesus speaks of the eating of His flesh and the drinking of His blood, He understands

primarily by this, a relation which may at once be formed, the giving up of one's own natural life and being, and unconditional consecration to the Son of man, so that His holy flesh and blood take the place of that which is natural and unholy, and His theanthropic personality penetrates and ennobles that of the ordinary man, so that he can say, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." We can obtain a clear conception of this in the case of the disciple whom Jesus loved, and who rested in His bosom. He had already truly eaten, before the atoning death of Jesus Christ, with the mouth of the Spirit, and had drunk His blood, and had become a different person, as one alive from the dead,—he had obtained different inclinations and impulses, different features, a different look, and a different step. But there were further developments before him, in which the eating of the flesh and drinking of the blood received a deeper meaning; and Christ had these developments already in view, when He with so much emphasis made all salvation dependent on the eating of His flesh and the drinking of His blood. After Christ had offered up His flesh upon the cross, and had thus earned new power of life for our flesh, which was pervaded with death, and after His sacred blood had there taken away sin, He became in a still higher degree the food of the soul. And this is the third stage in the Holy Supper: His "body, for us wounded," and His sacred blood, were made, by an adorable mystery, and an ever-repeated miracle, the central-point of the Church. The enjoyment in the Supper forms no opposition to the purely spiritual enjoyment, as it is *primarily* taught here, but rather its highest degree—the condition of efficacious and lifelong realization of the demand, which Christ here expresses.<sup>1</sup>—Only if the words of Christ refer directly and exclusively to the Lord's Supper can the assertion of Stier be justified, that the Supper is to be understood absolutely according to this pas-

<sup>1</sup> The essentially correct view is to be found already in Bengel: "Jesus verba sua scienter ita formavit, ut statim illa quidem de spirituali fruitione sui agerent proprie; sed posthac eadem consequenter etiam in augustissimum sacræ coenæ mysterium, quum id institutum foret, convenienter. Etenim ipsam rem hoc sermone propositum in s. cœnam contulit: tantique hoc sacramentum est momenti, ut facile existimari possit, Jesum, ut proditionem Judæ, ver. 71, ita etiam sacram coenam uno anno ante prædictis. Tota hæc de carne et sanguine Christi oratio Christi passionem spectat et cum ea sacram coenam."

sage, and that Luther's "exaggerated doctrine of the eating and drinking of unbelievers" is by it entirely refuted. The relation of the body and blood of Christ to unbelievers lies here without the circle of thought, not being in the same line with that purely spiritual appropriation, which is here the fundamental conception. In this misuse of the passage, he had, however, been preceded by the Reformed theologians. It was fear of this misuse which led so many Lutheran theologians to deny altogether the reference to the Supper.

Ver. 54. "Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." Cf. ver. 40, where *believing* occupies the same position as the eating of the flesh and blood here.—Ver. 55. "For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed." For ἀληθῶς Lachmann and Tischendorf read ἀληθής. But to the former a parallel is furnished by ἀληθῶς Ἰσραὴλίτης in i. 48, and ἀληθῶς μαθηταῖ in viii. 31; while, on the other hand, not a single exactly accordant parallel passage can be brought forward for ἀληθής. Ἀληθῶς or ἀληθής forms the antithesis to a merely imaginary food; ἀληθινός would form an antithesis to a lower food, like the manna. Substantially, however, the two amount to pretty much the same, for the inferior food may be regarded as merely mock food. According to vers. 27, 58, the Lord seems to have the manna really in view. By ἀληθῶς or ἀληθής, however, is at all events, together with the manna, all that which, apart from the flesh and blood of Christ, promises to satisfy human hunger and thirst, degraded to a mere mock satisfaction, in harmony with Isa. iv. 2: "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken, hearken unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Apart from the salvation brought by Christ, all else is, according to this passage, not bread, but such as does not serve to satisfy the soul.—Ver. 56. "He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him." Since the natural character of man and the nature of Christ are totally opposed to each other, a true and lasting union between them can be brought about only when the man gives up his nature and receives into himself the nature of Christ. The man must become Jesus-like, or his union with Christ will be only a vain pretence, which vanishes like a morn-

ing cloud. Our text is the fundamental passage with respect to dwelling in Christ. That which is here intimated is carried out in xv. 4 sq.; and that which occurs in the first Epistle of John ii. 6, 24, iii. 6, is to be regarded as its echo. In the Gospel this expression is not found, except in the passages designated. The distinction from the first Gospels is not a decided one, since they do not communicate the last discourses of Christ in the circle of His disciples, in which the main passage is found.—Ver. 57. “As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.” Christ brings the life, of which the original source is the Father, down to the human race, which since Gen. iii. is involved in death. To the words: On the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die, are, after Christ has appeared in the flesh, opposed these: In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt live. The discourse of Christ returns at its close to the generalness of the commencement. He here says again, He that eateth *Me*; not, He that eateth My flesh and blood.—Ver. 58 takes up again the figure of the bread of the life as contrasted with the manna in vers. 48–51, and thus rounds off the discourse. Ver. 58. “This is the bread, which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat, and are dead. He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.”—Ver. 59. “These things said He in the synagogue, as He taught in Capernaum.”

#### THE CONVERSATIONS OF JESUS WITH HIS DISCIPLES AT THE CLOSE OF THAT WITH THE JEWS.

##### VERSES 60–71.

Ver. 60. “Many therefore of His disciples, when they heard this, said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it?”—The *disciples*—those who already stood in a close relation to Christ—are opposed to those Jews who were only superficially touched. The disciples offered a great variety, as represented in the parable of the sower. It was not all who thus spoke, but only many. Jesus says in ver. 64: *εἰσὶν ἐξ ὑμῶν τινὲς, οἱ οὐ πιστεύουσιν.* The Apostles also were among the disciples, and formed the centre of a whole multitude of those who were deeply interested. Of the number of those who here took offence, many certainly returned repentant and ashamed, when, by the resurrection of Christ, the high demands were sealed and justi-

fied, to which they were now unable to reconcile themselves. Cf. vers. 61 and 62, and the words of Christ, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.” A *hard* saying is one repugnant, unpleasant, and offensive, in opposition to a tender, mild, and agreeable one : cf. *σκληρὸν δὲ ἔφανη τὸ ρῆμα σφόδρα* in Gen. xxi. 11, LXX. ; and ver. 15 of the Epistle of Jude, *περὶ πάντων τῶν σκληρῶν ὡν ἐλάλησαν*, where the hard speeches are those which are repugnant. The ground of their repugnant and offensive character was not their form,—for then they would have said to Christ : *φράσον ἡμῖν τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην*, Matt. xiii. 36, xv. 15,—but the matter itself. They had not obtained a deeper insight into their own character, their unfathomable corruption (cf. iii. 6, and *πονηροὶ ὄντες*, Matt. vii. 11), and into the nature of Christ, His true divinity ; and thus they cannot reconcile themselves to His being all and they nothing, and they rebel against the requirement to leave all and cleave to Christ. The remark, “ And indeed the saying appeared hard to them, because they could not receive the thought of the death of the Messiah,” testifies of a complete misapprehension of the question. It is not His death that Christ has spoken of, but the eating of His flesh and blood as the necessary condition of life. He had adjudged all to death who do not obtain life by the eating of His flesh. The expression, *Who can hear it?* is—according to Jer. vi. 10, LXX. : *ἰδοὺ ἀπερίτυμτα τὰ ὡτα αὐτῶν καὶ οὐ δυνήσονται ἀκούειν*, and Mark iv. 33 : *καὶ τοιαύταις παραβολαῖς πολλαῖς ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον, καθὼς ἡδύναντο ἀκούειν—q.d.*, who can understand it ? As the object of hearing is to understand, a saying that is not understood is as though it were not heard ; and here the unintelligible is the senseless, the absurd. The key to the understanding of the saying of Christ is the perception of one’s own misery, and of the Divine majesty of Christ. Those who have not this key must regard Christ’s demand as incomprehensible.

Ver. 61. “ When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples murmured at it, He said unto them, Doth this offend you ? 62. [What] and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before ?”—The disciples whispered among themselves. Jesus did not hear them with the bodily ear, and needed not to ask ; He perceived what they said in the spirit, as He who knew what was in man, ii. 25. Cf. with *εἰδὼς ἐν ἑαυτῷ* the expression, *καὶ*

λόδων ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὰς ἐνθυμήσεις αὐτῶν, in Matt. ix. 4 (before, εἰπον  
 ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, they *thought*), xii. 25. There is an aposiopesis at the  
 close of ver. 62: What shall ye then say? Shall ye still take  
 offence? The ascension of Christ was adapted to cause offence  
 only in so far as it furnished a proof that the weakness of the  
 flesh, which was the ground of it, was assumed by Him freely  
 and in loving condescension. Christ was proved to be the Son  
 of God by the resurrection, and its consummation in the ascen-  
 sion, Rom. i. 4; so that all appearance of presumption is com-  
 pletely removed, and a powerful counter argument is furnished  
 to the declaration, “The son of Joseph, whose father and  
 mother we know.” That this is the true seat of the offence, is  
 expressly indicated by Christ in designating Himself the Son of  
 man. Elsewhere also He opposes to the doubt and offence  
 which proceeded from the lowliness of His human appearance,  
 and the contempt which was based upon it, His resurrection,  
 ascension, and glorification. Cf. ii. 18, 19, viii. 28; Matt.  
 xxvi. 64.—The word θεωρεῖν, which is an especial favourite of  
 John, is commonly used of seeing outwardly. We have the  
 commentary to θεωρῆτε in the words, βλεπόντων αὐτῶν ἐπήρθη,  
 in Acts i. 9. Cf. also Rev. xi. 12, where with respect to the  
 ascent of the two witnesses to heaven, which is a *copy* of Christ’s  
 ascension, it is said: καὶ ἀνέβησαν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ,  
 καὶ ἐθεώρησαν αὐτοὺς οἱ ἔχθροι αὐτῶν. Here the vision is  
 evidently a bodily one. When the Son of man ascends, His  
 ascension also can be only a visible one. The saying is directed  
 to the disciples in general. It is sufficient that the ascension  
 should take place in the presence of the disciples merely. Those  
 who were present represent the entire body of the disciples.  
 The expression, *to ascend up to heaven*, is always used in the  
 New Testament of the ascension in the proper sense, the visible  
 ascension of Christ. Cf. remarks on iii. 13. Even in His  
 conversation with Nicodemus, Christ had referred to His ascen-  
 sion, and He also mentions it in xx. 17. For the very reason  
 that he does not give an account of the ascension, John loves to  
 communicate those expressions of Christ which relate to it, fol-  
 lowing the same course in this as with respect to Baptism and  
 the Lord’s Supper. To the intimations of the ascension here,  
 and in the other passages quoted (cf. also xvi. 28), corresponds  
 that in Rev. xi. 11, 12; on which it was remarked in my Com-

mentary, “The form in which the triumph of the witnesses, after their apparent defeat, is here related, is derived from the history of Christ, whose ascension is typical of the lot of His followers.”—*Avaβaίνω*, used of Christ’s ascension, has reference to the prefigurative ascensions of the Lord and His Angel under the Old Covenant. In Judges xiii. 20 it is said, “And the Angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar, and Manoah and his wife saw it;” in Ps. xlvi. 5, “God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.” The Lord rises to heaven, typifying the ascension of Christ, after He had made Himself known on earth in acts of omnipotence and love, and has prosecuted the cause of His people. Cf. also Gen. xvii. 22; Ps. lxviii. 19.—“Where He was before.” The Lord had repeatedly said that He came down *from heaven*. In xvi. 28 He says that He came forth *from the Father*, and is come into the world; but that again He will leave the world, and will go to the Father. According to chap. i., the Logos was with God, Christ according to His Divine nature. Here the being in heaven, or with God, is ascribed to the Son of man on account of the unity of His person.<sup>1</sup> Among the diverse explanations, the most untenable is this: “You are offended at My words concerning My death; how much more will it offend you when I die!” It is not probable, *a priori*, that Christ would bring forward that which was only adapted to increase the offence. Jesus had not, according to the correct interpretation, previously spoken a single word concerning His death. It is assumed without reason that the disciples took offence at Jesus’ announcement of His death; while the object of the offence is, throughout this conversation, that Jesus, in spite of His lowliness, takes all from His followers, and gives all to Himself, and that He is not willing to be the first among equals, but the God-man. The words here cannot refer to the death, but only to the ascension, and indeed to a visible ascension. This does, indeed, presuppose the death; but His death could not possibly be designated here by that consequence of it which removes all ground of offence.—The opinion, that the ascension of Christ would remove the offence only in so far as

<sup>1</sup> Calvin: “Hæc loquendi formula insolens non est, quando duæ naturæ in Christo personam unam constituant, quod unius proprium est, ad alteram transferre.”

it shows that it is not a carnal eating of Christ that is spoken of,<sup>1</sup> is based on the fiction of a carnal misunderstanding of the words of Christ, while, as it has been already shown, the opposition is directed against the words of Christ as rightly understood.—Finally, the interpretation of Stier: “Then will it be disclosed to you that, and in what way, My human corporeity, become heavenly and glorified, may be given to be eaten and to be drunk,” is founded on the incorrect assumption that Christ is speaking of a purely future eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood.

Ver. 63. “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life.”—If it is established that in ver. 62 Christ obviates the offence which the Jews took at His apparently assigning too much to Himself, even that which absolutely transcended the sphere of man, and at His seeming to displace the boundaries between heaven and earth by His reference to His divinity, to be hereafter proved by the ascension, we shall expect here also a reference to the Divine nature concealed behind His appearance as the Son of man. A transition to a new thought would have been more distinctly designated; and if there be one here, the words receive a rhapsodical, fragmentary character, and the exposition enters into the slippery region of guess-work.—“The flesh” cannot possibly be the flesh of Christ. The whole impression of the preceding discourse, where Christ has so emphatically made life and salvation dependent on the eating of His flesh, would be destroyed, if He here at once denied all value to His flesh. If He had meant *mere* flesh in contrast with that which was penetrated by the Divine nature, He must at all events have said this more distinctly, since all depended on this point, and it was not this which caused the offence, but that Christ represented His flesh as bearing the Divine nature, or as deified.—Everywhere else, when there is an antithesis of flesh and spirit, the spirit is the Divine principle, and flesh the lower corporeity, especially weak, sinful, and materialistic human nature. So in Isa. xxxi. 3, and in John iii. 6, “That which

<sup>1</sup> Augustine: “Illi putabant eum erogaturum corpus suum, ille autem dixit se adscensurum in cœlum, utique integrum.—Certe vel tunc videbitis, quia non eo modo, quo putatis, erogat corpus suum; certe vel tunc intelligetis, quia gratia ejus non consumitur morsibus.”

is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” Rom. viii. 5 : *Oι γὰρ κατὰ σάρκα ὄντες, τὰ τῆς σαρκὸς φρονοῦσιν οἱ δὲ κατὰ πνεῦμα, τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος.* Ver. 8 : *Oι δὲ ἐν σαρκὶ ὄντες, Θεῷ ἀρέσαι οὐ δύνανται.* Ver. 9 : ‘Τμεῖς δὲ οὐκ ἔστε ἐν σαρκὶ, ἀλλ’ ἐν πνεύματι, εἰπερ πνεῦμα Θεοῦ οἰκεῖ ἐν ἡμῖν.—The Spirit is here represented by Christ ; q.d., the Spirit, as the resurrection and ascension will show, dwells in Me. That which Christ here ascribes to the Spirit, He elsewhere ascribes to Himself, as just before, and in v. 21, ‘Ο νὺὸς οὐς θέλει ζωοποιεῖ. It is a fundamental thought in the Gospel, that life proceeds only from Christ. If therefore quickening power is here ascribed to the Spirit, this can be regarded as the case only in so far as He dwells in Christ, and passes from Him to His believing ones, who thus become *θελας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως*, 2 Pet. i. 4, are received into the sphere of the Spirit, which is the Divine Spirit, and removed from the sphere of the flesh, to which all that is human apart from Christ is miserably banished. Christ has His name from the Spirit, being called the Anointed, as pervaded by the Spirit ; and from the Spirit He has His origin : *τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματός ἔστιν ἄγιον*, says the angel to Mary. To possess the Spirit without measure is designated by the Baptist, in iii. 34, as the high prerogative of Christ. As Bleek remarks on Heb. ix. 14, “The *πνεῦμα* which is here spoken of, cannot be other than the *πνεῦμα ἄγιον*, the Spirit of God, who is at the same time the Spirit of Christ, which already during His walk on earth dwelt in all His fulness in Him, was to Him at every moment His animating principle, and did not allow Him to be subject to the dominion of death. It is the same which in Rom. i. 4 is designated as *πνεῦμα ἄγιωσύνης*, by virtue of which Jesus is the Son of God, in opposition to the *σάρξ*, by virtue of which He is the Son of David.” And Philippi on Rom. i. 4, “*Πνεῦμα ἄγιωσύνης* is here nothing else than the higher, heavenly, Divine nature of Christ, by which or in which He is the Son of God.” This higher Divine nature of Christ is designated by *πνεῦμα* also in 1 Pet. iii. 18 : *Θανατωθεὶς μὲν σαρκὶ, ζωοποιηθεὶς δὲ πνεύματι.* In 2 Cor. iii. 17 Christ is called *τὸ πνεῦμα*, in harmony with *πνεῦμα ὁ Θεός* in iv. 24, and with Isa. xxxi. 3, where the Divine essence, in opposition to that which is earthly and material, is designated by Spirit : “Now the Egyptians are men, and not God ; and

their horses flesh, and not spirit."—To the Spirit represented by Christ, and incarnate in Him, is opposed the flesh, or humanity destitute of the Spirit. In what respect it profiteth nothing, is to be learnt from the first clause, viz., for the attainment of life. We have here the same thought which our Lord expresses in ver. 53, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, ye have no life in you,"—with this difference; that here this thought is suggested at the same time by the reference to the fact, that the Son of man is Spirit, but all others are flesh, of which it is the necessary consequence, that the quickening power can proceed only from Him. By this view only is brought into a clear light the manifest connection of this declaration with iii. 6, and Rom. viii. 5, 8, 9. Luther: "Christ calls all that flesh which is born of the flesh,—all the children of Adam, who come of the flesh, with the exception of the unique body of Christ, which was born not of the flesh, but of the Holy Ghost, as we confess in the Creed: I believe in Christ, who was conceived not of the flesh, but of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost has begotten Him, and penetrated His flesh with spirit."—That the life-giving Spirit dwells in Him, Christ proves preliminarily, until the great proof has been given by His resurrection and ascension, by the character of His words, spoken here and previously (*λελάληκα*, not *λαλῶ*, is the best authenticated and correct reading: Christ is speaking to His *disciples*, who had long been instructed by Him), which breathe out life and spirit as the breath of His personality. If He speaks such words as never man spake, vii. 46, and if His words have a life-giving and spiritualizing effect, He must indeed be spirit. Luther: "These words are really spirit, and lead a man into another world and state of being, and give him another heart and mind, so far above and beyond all reason, that the reason cannot comprehend it, although it would gladly do so."—According to a very old interpretation, by spirit is here designated a spiritual, and by flesh a literal apprehension. Even Tertullian says, "de resurrectione carnis per spiritum hic intelligi sensum spiritualem, per carnem autem carnalem." On the other hand, as Lampe justly remarks, there is no proof that a spiritual sense is designated in the Scriptures by spirit alone. It is, however, still more decisive, that this exposition is based on the entirely unfounded assumption of a carnal

misunderstanding of the words of Jesus.—On the same foundation also rests the view of Kahnis: “The act which will terminate My earthly presence, and render My earthly body a heavenly one, will end the misunderstanding.—Ye shall eat My body, but not as outward flesh, but as bearing My spirit, not My earthly, but My heavenly body as glorified in spirit.” The second incorrect basis of this view is the opinion, that Christ, in ver. 51 sq., spoke of a purely future oral enjoyment of His glorified body and blood. The Jews understood Christ quite correctly to make a requisition which was to be realized at once.

Ver. 64. “But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him.”—Jesus throws the fault of the offence back on those who wished to lay it upon Him: It is not My presumption, but your unbelief. A commentary to the words, “from the beginning,” is formed by the remark of the Evangelist, made of Cephas in i. 43, and of Nathanael in i. 48. The beginning of the relation into which Christ enters with individuals, forms the antithesis to a longer association, which gives occasion to psychological observations. Not from such did Jesus derive His knowledge, but from His participation in the privilege of Him who tries the hearts and the reins: cf. remarks on ii. 24, 25.—It is in vain to twist and trifle with the declaration that Jesus knew from the beginning who should betray Him. He could not have been the Logos appeared in the flesh, nor the Son of God, nor our Saviour, if it had been otherwise. His previous knowledge of the betrayal of Judas, far from determining Jesus not to receive him among the Apostles, must have rather occasioned His doing so. The circle of the Apostles would not have been the true representation of the Church, which it was to be, if Judas had not been included in it. It is a fact of the greatest significance, and admonishes us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, that it was one of those nearest to the Saviour who betrayed Him, in proof that nothing can avail but an unconditional surrender of the heart, and unceasing watchfulness and prayer. The opinion, however, that Jesus needed not to have furthered the crime of Judas by receiving him into His company, is founded on a misapprehension of the living moral plan of the world in God and

in Christ, which even to the present day still involves those whose hearts are not right in circumstances in which the temptation comes to them, whereby their sin is developed and matured. Most murderers might have been quite respectable people under other circumstances. It was for Judas, if he would repent, the highest of all graces, but if not, his just punishment, that he was brought into proximity to Christ. It was not a fate which ruled over him : conversion was at any moment accessible to him. If he had sought it, he would have obtained salvation ; but he was received into the number of the Apostles in the foresight that he would not seek it. The circumstance that the bag was entrusted to Judas, at which some take offence, in case Christ penetrated his character, presupposes his tendency to avarice. If we do not thus view the fact, Jesus must have had less psychological penetration than every advanced Christian. The development of sin is necessary for both conversion and judgment. Every one is still so led, that all must be manifest which is hidden in the depths of his heart ; and it is not the manner of God to be careful not to awaken that which is slumbering in the heart, but His whole leading is designed to bring about a decision either for salvation or for perdition.

Ver. 65. "And He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me, except it were given him of My Father."—*Therefore*, in foresight of your unbelief, and in order to obviate the offence which might arise from it. The Lord refers to vers. 44, 37. Cf. *οὐκ ἡδύναυτο πιστεύειν* in xii. 39. Unbelief loses its offensiveness when it is regarded from the point of view of a Divine appointment, a righteous Divine judgment. This gives the occasion for turning and plucking up the evil roots which call forth this judgment.

Ver. 66. "From that [time] many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him."—*Ἐκ τούτου* occurs likewise in xix. 12. *Ἀπῆλθον εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω* refers to Isa. i. 4, Ps. xliv. 18, where the *turning back* occurs with respect to Jehovah.

Ver. 67. "Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?"—This sudden introduction of the twelve Apostles, in their full number, shows that John presupposes the former Evangelists, who had recorded the appointment and names of

these twelve. The Apostles are designated as the “twelve,” not because they happened to be just twelve, but from the significance of the number twelve. On the ground of the fact, that the sons of Jacob, the ancestors of Israel, were twelve in number, the number twelve appears repeatedly in the Old Testament as the signature of the covenant-people, the Church; and on the ground of this significance, the Lord called just twelve Apostles, who represented the Church of the New Covenant, the authorized continuation of the Old Testament Israel. In the Apocalypse the number twelve appears repeatedly as the signature of the Church of the New Covenant. Cf. my Commentary on iv. 4, vii. 4.—Jesus asks the twelve, not as though He were in doubt, but, where so much unbelief has been acknowledged, a reviving conclusion is necessary; and He therefore asks in order to call forth a solemn confession of faith by the Apostles, who represent the believing Church of the New Testament, in opposition to Judaism, fast ripening into the synagogue of Satan.

Ver. 68. “Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. 69. And we believe, and are sure, that Thou art Christ, the Son of (the living) God.”—Peter answers in the name of the Apostles, not, as Lampe supposes, “ex solito fervore, quo solebat alios præverteere,” but as the called head and authorized mouthpiece of the Apostles, in the energy of the spirit of faith, on the ground of which this eminent position was assigned to him. The words, “To whom shall we go?” indicate, that if we turn away from Christ, wherever we may go, we shall only find death and certain destruction before us. The declaration, “Thou hast the words of eternal life,”—those which bring with them and give eternal life,—is the answer of the confessing Church to that of Christ, “The words which I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life,” in ver. 63. Christ’s words, because they are living, are also quickening. The clause, “we are sure,” added to, “we have believed,” indicates that faith is not blind, but is supported on established facts. The declaration, “Thou art Christ,” the Anointed, the bearer of the Spirit, is the answer of the confessing Church to that of Christ, “It is the Spirit that quickeneth,”—*q. d.*, I make alive, because the Spirit is represented by Me. The added clause, “the Son of

God," refers to the immediately preceding, ver. 65 (cf. ver. 57), where Christ had designated God as His Father. The Christ is, as such, also the Son of God ; but as there was a lower conception of Him, the addition was of importance.<sup>1</sup> The addition, *τοῦ ζῶντος*, is but poorly authorized, and was probably introduced from Matt. xvi. 15. If the authority had been better, it would have been recommended as genuine by the reference to ver. 57. It is a great thing to be the Son of the living God, whose fulness of life passes over to the Son.—Lachmann and Tischendorf read *ὁ ἄγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ*. But though the authorities in favour of this reading are important, and it is also a natural supposition that the words, *ὁ νῖος τοῦ Θεοῦ*, have been brought hither from Matt. xvi. 15, we must still have some hesitation in giving up the latter reading. The peculiar expression, *ὁ ἄγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ*, which has no root in the Old Testament, and only imperfect parallels in *ὅν ὁ πατὴρ ἡγίασε* in x. 36, and in 1 John ii. 20, where Christ is designated as *ὁ ἄγιος*, has probably been introduced from Mark i. 24, where the possessed man says, *οἴδα σε τίς εἶ, ὁ ἄγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ* (Origen has here *νῖος*, on the reverse, for *ἄγιος*), and from Luke iv. 34. It would be strange if Peter accorded exactly with the possessed man in this expression, which is not found elsewhere in the whole New Testament. The expression has no support in the discourse of Christ, the echo of which we perceive elsewhere in this verse ; and it also declares less than we expect. After all that which Christ has claimed, we expect a glad confession of His deity. It was the emphatic declaration of this that had caused the offence, and developed and matured the unbelief. In opposition to this, belief must also receive its full expression. The *Holy One* of God would testify only of a Divine mission, and therefore still less than the name Christ.

Ver. 70. "Jesus answered them, Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?"—Peter had spoken for the twelve, and the answer is directed to the disciples generally, but primarily to Peter. It is in him that our Lord elsewhere also opposes the confidence which borders on undue self-exaltation: cf. xiii. 37, 38; Luke xxii. 33, 34; Matt. xiv. 28–33.—Why does

<sup>1</sup> Lampe : "Ipsi Judæi carnales in præcedente colloquio, qui eum tanquam Christum creare regem volebant, concoquere tamen nequibant, quod divinam originem sibi per discensum e cælo tribueret."

Jesus speak here of the betrayal of Judas? He wishes to put to shame the confidence of Peter, who had, as it were, given security for all, and to admonish all to watchfulness and prayer. Our Lord pursues a similar course at the last Supper: Ἀμὴν—He there says, Matt. xxvi. 21—λέγω ὑμῖν, ὅτι εἰς ἐξ ὑμῶν παραδώσει με. The feeling which prompts each of the disciples to say, μήτι ἐγώ εἰμι, κύριε, is that which He wishes to quicken in them. Quesnel: “Wondrous procedure of Jesus Christ, to leave the Apostles so long in such terrible uncertainty, while each had reason to distrust himself, and all were under obligation to judge no one, and not to suspect their neighbour of such a crime. Fear and distrust with respect to our weakness, the duty of watching our hearts and of observing ourselves, aversion to sin, and Christian humility, are the fruits of this disquietude, which God brings out of it by His grace.” Jesus calls His betrayer a devil, *i.e.*, a man of absolutely devilish disposition. Διάβολος occurs in the Gospels, especially in that of John, and likewise in the Epistles of John and the Apocalypse, always only of the devil. As an appellative, it is found altogether only a few times in Paul: 1 Tim. iii. 11; 2 Tim. iii. 3; Tit. ii. 3; and there it has always the meaning of calumniator, which is not suitable here. Of Satan is, according to 1 John iii. 8, every one that committeth sin. The wicked are represented as the *children* of Satan in John viii. 44; cf. Acts xiii. 10, where Paul addresses Elymas the Magian as Son of Satan. Judas the betrayer is brought into special relation to Satan in xiii. 2, according to which the devil put it into his heart to betray Christ. Our text accords still more closely with xiii. 27 (cf. Luke xxii. 3), καὶ μετὰ τὸ ψωμίον, τότε εἰσῆλθεν εἰς ἐκεῖνον ὁ Σατανᾶς. After he had put it into the heart of Judas, he himself entered in; and he, into whom Satan has entered, is himself an incarnate Satan. Perfectly analogous, however, is Matt. xvi. 23 (Mark viii. 33), where Jesus says to Peter: ὑπαγε ὀπίσω μου, Σατανᾶ. There also Satan is a satanic man, an incarnate Satan. That Jesus does not address Satan himself, but Peter, who had for the moment resigned himself to him, is shown by the words, ὅτι οὐ φρονεῖς τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἀλλὰ τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, which does not suit Satan, but only Peter. The parallel is here to be drawn the rather, since it is not John, but Christ, who speaks. In the preceding discourse, Christ had represented Himself as the life

of believers, and had desired that they should eat His flesh and blood, and become partakers of His nature; and with this it corresponds, that He here ascribes the unbelievers and wicked to Satan. Christ and Satan are the two ruling powers. He in whom Christ is not formed, must finally assume the form in which Satan appears. Judas, in this respect, bears a typical character, being the first who matured into a devil.

Ver. 71. “He spake of Judas of Simon, Iscariot : for he it was that should betray Him, being one of the twelve.”—John only has communicated the name of the father of the betrayer. The surname Iscariot (*Ισκαριώτην*, not with Lachmann *Ισκαριώτον*) is usually explained to mean, *man of Karioth*, a wholly obscure place in the tribe of Judah, of which we know only the bare name from Josh. xv. 25. But there are serious difficulties connected with this explanation. Of the surnames of the New Testament, none refers to the place of nativity. For designations like ὁ ἀπὸ Ἀρμαθίας are not to be regarded as surnames. Usually these surnames have a theological character : cf. Acts i. 23, iv. 36. Especially is this the case with all the surnames of the Apostles. So of Boanerges, which Jesus gives to the sons of Zebedee, Mark iii. 17 ; and so of the surname Peter. The surnames of the other Judas among the Apostles, Thaddæus and Lebbæus, have likewise a theological character, denoting the heartiness of the relation of love in which the Master stands to *this* Judas : *bosom-friend*, from תְּרֵ – שָׁר, *mamma*, and diaphragm (darling). Since it is a fact that several of the Apostles bore significant names (one is Matthew, gift of God, surname of the former Levi ; and another “the Zealot,” as surname of Simon, Matt. x. 4), and especially he, with whom the list of Apostles always begins, it is not to be assumed that the surname of Judas, with whom the list closes, and whom it was most natural to characterize theologically, has no such signification. The necessity of distinguishing this Judas from others of the same name, and especially the other Apostle Judas, is already met in another way, by giving the other Judas the name Lebbæus, in the place of his proper name, together with the name Thaddæus, and also by the designation *Ἰούδας Ἰακώβου*, by which he could and must distinguish himself from the other Judas, because the names Lebbæus and Thaddæus were only suitable to be used by others ; and further, by the addition of

the name of his father, Simon, to that of Judas the Traitor. The fact, that Ἰσκαριώτης also is added, where the interchange was already prevented by the addition Σίμωνος, as here, in xii. 4, and xiii. 2, 26, shows that this surname must have had another design. It is also of importance to note that there is no trace that Judas bore the name Iscariot before his betrayal. Jesus addresses him in Luke xxii. 48 merely as Judas.—The name Iscariot means, *the man of lies*, אִישׁ שְׁקָרִים. We have probably the root of the surname, which was given to the traitor after his deed and its sad consequence, in Prov. xix. 5, “A false witness, יְדֵ שְׁקָרִים, shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape.” Here we have both the deed of Judas, —which he himself confessed, “I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood,”—and his fate. The only objection that can be brought against this explanation,<sup>1</sup> that the inserted ω cannot be thus explained, is not decisive, since the ground of the insertion may be a euphonic one. A full and sounding form was desired.—”*Hμελλεν* does not designate his design to betray, but only the futurity of the fact: cf. xii. 4, and ὁ παραδόσων αὐτόν, ver. 64.—Jesus on this occasion spoke, as it seems, for the first time of the betrayal of Judas. The assertion, however, that He had not *thought* of it before, is in manifest opposition to “from the beginning” in ver. 64, and to the true divinity of Christ, which does not permit the thought, that for a considerable time He had, without suspecting it, cherished a serpent in His bosom. That Jesus, whose fore-knowledge must be kept in strict separation from His fore-ordination, nevertheless offered to the future betrayer all the benefits of His kingdom, in devoted love held intercourse with him, and made every effort to touch and gain his heart, is a fact which is still repeated, and without which Christ could not be the Saviour of the world. No one can be lost for whom Christ has not done all that can be done, and without the truth of the declaration, “Ye would not,” having been most clearly illustrated.

<sup>1</sup> The extrusion of a ψ, on the concurrence of two in a compound proper name, is found likewise, e.g., in Jerusalem and elsewhere: cf. my Treatise on Balaam, S. 20.

## THE FOURTH GROUP, CHAP. VII. 1—XII. 50,

Includes what took place on the last visit paid by Jesus to the Feast of Tabernacles, and from that date onwards to the final Passover. The narrative of ch. vii. refers to the former of those feasts; and ch. viii.—x. 21 records what occurred between the Feast of Tabernacles and that of the Dedication. The transactions at the Feast of Dedication are narrated in vers. 22—39. In vers. 40—42 mention is made of a short abode on the other side of the Jordan. The journey of Jesus to Bethany in order to raise Lazarus occupies ch. xi. 1—53; in ver. 54 Jesus goes back to Ephraim. The return to Bethany is in ch. xii. 1—12; the entrance into Jerusalem, vers. 12 seq.; and finally, the conclusion of the first part of the whole is found in vers. 37 seq.

All in this section tends to prepare for Christ's death on the cross. The hatred of the Jews is exhibited in its continuous growth; and Jesus increases that hatred, as if designedly, by the unintermitting assertion of the dignity of His person—an assertion which was a lasting offence to the Jews. These confessions and testimonies of Christ to Himself are a rich source of edification to faith; while the copiousness with which the Evangelist records the solemn vanity of the subterfuges resorted to by the Jews,—who, notwithstanding all the specious arguments which they adduced against Christ, fell under the desolating judgment of God,—is fruitful in instruction and warning. The latter holds good especially in reference to ch. vii., which places in lively presentation before us the natural man, hating and flying from Christ, loving and cherishing his sins, while denying that he does so, and wilfully transferring to the theological domain what belonged simply to the moral. “In this chapter,” says Anton, “we have a complete collection of judgments, one saying this and another that about Christ. Thus do the poor children of men fluctuate in doubt, and through their own fault; because they are not influenced in their contention by pure love of truth, with which they are only trifling. Let us judge ourselves accordingly.”

Chap. vii. 1. “After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for He would not walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to

kill Him."—Jesus had also previously betaken Himself to Galilee. He had remained there during the whole year, between the Passover of ch. v. and the Passover of ch. vi. 4. But reference is only to the walking which took place after the event recorded in ch. vi.; because with that was connected the representation of the "brethren," who were discontented because Jesus kept Himself *so long* at a distance from Judea. The Jews in this passage were not Jews, as contradistinguished from Galileans: the name designates, as is shown in ch. ii., the whole people. But their rulers were the soul of the people; and they not only had their seat in Galilee, but exercised uncontrolled influence there; whereas in Galilee they were held in check by Herod: comp. on ch. iv. 1.<sup>1</sup> "They sought to kill Him," points back to ch. v. 16, 18. The fact recorded in that chapter formed a turning-point. The Jews were led by it to purposes of murder: and not merely under a transitory impulse, for they from that time kept that end firmly and steadily in view. The persevering and energetic hatred of the Pharisees, as recorded by John, is corroborated by the synoptical accounts of the mission of the emissaries who came about the same time from Jerusalem to Galilee: see Matt. xv. 1 seq., xvi. 1 seq.; Mark vii. 1 seq., viii. 11 seq. In consequence of the movements of these Pharisaic spies, Jesus retreated into the region of Tyre and Sidon, Matt. xv. 21. The present verse embraces in one the events of an entire half-year. We perceive in this condensation an indirect reference to the earlier Evangelists, who do in fact furnish the details that fill up the gap lying here before us. The whole supplement lies in Matt. xv.—xviii. In ch. xiv. he records the feeding of the five thousand, in harmony with our ch. vi., and the miraculous intervention of Jesus upon the lake. In ch. xix. 1, he relates that Jesus finally left Galilee to go up to Jerusalem; and the setting forth must be identical with that of John vii. 10, for after this also we hear of no more returning to Galilee. But Matthew, who before the passion limits his record of what took place to the events in Galilee, omits the residence of Jesus at Jerusalem during the Feasts of Tabernacles and Dedication, and all

<sup>1</sup> Luther: So there are some lands now where the bishops have no power; as Wittenberg, where our angry enemies would do us harm, but dare not.

that is related in John down to ch. x. 39, bringing our Lord from Perea into Judea, in harmony with John x. 40. "And it came to pass," says Matthew, "that when Jesus had finished these sayings, He departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan." That Judea lay for Jesus beyond Jordan, shows that He came direct from Perea. *Πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου*, is an expression used subjectively with reference to the position of the traveller; and it is the same in effect as the *διὰ τοῦ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου* of Mark x. 1, where the phrase is a standing geographical designation. The section of Matthew which furnishes the supplementary details to ch. vii. 1, contains many allusions to the nearness of the consummation of our Lord's destiny; so that we find ourselves at the threshold of the Passover. "From that time forth," we read in ch. xvi. 21, "began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." The fact of the Transfiguration, related in ch. xvii., presupposes the near approach of the gloomy season of sorrow. It formed, as it were, a defence against the temptations of that season. A repeated pre-intimation of the coming passion is found in ch. vii. 22 seq. Mark records the feeding of the five thousand, and the miracle on the sea, in ch. vi.; the journey into Judea in ch. x. 1. Thus what lies intermediate between these is the complement of our ver. 1. The various changes of place which are mentioned in this section, explain the *περιεπάτει*—He journeyed round. Luke gives the feeding in ch. ix. 10–17; and what is recorded in vers. 18–50, falls under ver. 1 in John. In vers. 51–56 he tells us that Jesus, "when the time was come that He should be received," went up through Samaria to Jerusalem. The ungracious reception that He met with at the hands of the Samaritans, shows that He was going up to a feast: "because His face was as though He would go up to Jerusalem." Here we have the parallel of our ver. 10.

Jesus probably chose, on account of His delay in setting out, the nearest way; and as He travelled incognito, *οὐ φανερῶς ἀλλ' ως ἐν κρυπτῷ*, it is obvious that He would avoid the common way on which the Galileans went up to Jerusalem. They were in the habit of taking the longer way through Perea, in order to escape the attacks of the Samaritans. Luke appends

a series of events, which belong to various times. In the main and in the leading events, he preserves strictly the chronological order, *καθεξῆς*, ch. i. 3. But after having done this hitherto, so far as regards the main narrative—connecting, however, sometimes the order of events with the order of time—he gives here, before passing on to the narrative of the passion, a supplementary series of events, which he had not inserted chronologically. It is characteristic of this supplement, that the notes of time and place are everywhere undefined. And the harmony of the Gospels has been damaged much by violent attempts to enforce a chronological arrangement upon them, and to assign to a definite time things that belong to the most various periods, and are chronologically indifferent. See in Wieseler's "Synopsis" a specimen of the difficulties and incongruities in which this theory involves the harmonist. It is not till ch. xviii. 35 seq. that Luke resumes the order of time: there Jesus goes through Jericho to Jerusalem.

Ver. 2. "Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand." —The Evangelist marks the point of view which he occupied in constructing the account of ver. 1, and consequently gives the chronological limitation of the "walking" of ver. 1. The point of commencement was given in ch. vi. 4, from the time of the last Passover but one. The point of conclusion we have *here*. It is, in fact, until the next Feast of Tabernacles drew nigh. This, the last of the great yearly feasts, fell on the 15th day of the seventh month, and thus was divided from the Passover by half a year. The whole of the people, during this feast, abandoned their houses and dwelt in tents. The significance of this festivity was explained in Lev. xxiii. 42, 43: "Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them up out of the land of Egypt." The people brought vividly before their minds at this feast the grace which God had manifested to them formerly while travelling through the wilderness; and thus also they invigorated their faith that their ancient God would safely conduct them through the distresses and dangers of the present, although He might still lead them through rough and perilous paths; that He would never withdraw from them the needful protection; and that their cause, however threatening appearances might be, would finally issue in triumph.

Ver. 3. "His brethren therefore said unto Him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that Thy disciples also may see the works that Thou doest." Ver. 4. "For there is no man that doeth anything in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly: if Thou do these things, show Thyself to the world." Ver. 5. "For neither did His brethren believe in Him."—We have shown, in ch. ii. 12, that by the brethren of Jesus in the New Testament, we are to understand not literal brothers, but His nearest relations, the sons of Cleophas and Mary. This passage gives us the first seeming contradiction of that view. Three of the four cousins or brethren mentioned in Matt. xiii. 55, James, Simon, and Judas, belong to the number of the twelve Apostles. According to John vi. 70, the collective twelve, already at that time, were assembled around the Lord. But here the brethren seem to be in open opposition to the Lord: they seek to dictate to Him; they are referred to by Him as in league and friendship with the world; and the Evangelist expressly says, that they did not believe in Christ. Accordingly, it seems clear that the brethren of Jesus must be distinguished from the cousins who were already among the number of the Apostles.

We might, indeed, suppose that the brethren of Jesus here were other relatives than those who were received into the circle of the Apostles. Undoubtedly there were such relatives. In Matt. xiii. 55, besides the three among the Apostles, Joses is mentioned. In ver. 56 we read: "And His sisters, are they not all with us?" And the husbands of these sisters belonged, according to Old Testament and Jewish usage generally, to the number of His "brethren," or relations of Jesus: comp. for example, Gen. xxxi. 23, 37. But when we more narrowly examine this argument, we find that it is an unsatisfactory escape. It is not here as in Acts i. 14. There the enumeration of the Apostles had preceded, and that reckoning gives "with His brethren" a limitation: to wit, with those amongst His brethren who were not Apostles, such as Joses and the husbands of the sisters. But, on the other hand, there is no such limitation here thrown around them by the context; and there is no warrant for understanding by the brethren only a portion of the brethren.

When we study the question fully, however, we find that

there is no reason for excluding the three Apostles named from the number of the brethren. On the one hand, the words, “neither did His brethren believe in Him,” ver. 5, have been too rigorously pressed; and a worse meaning has been imposed upon the expressions of vers. 3 and 4 than rightly belongs to them. On the other hand, it has been overlooked, that in the apostolical circle there was as yet much imperfection. The manner in which the Lord, in ch. vi. 70, replied to the confident confession which Peter, in the name of all, uttered, “We believe that Thou art Christ, the Son of God,” points to the fact that this confession went beyond the real faith of the Apostles. The manner also in which He spoke of the treachery of Judas, intimated that germs of unbelief were still existing amongst the rest. The declaration which Christ then made, as the Searcher of hearts, finds its actual warrant and voucher in the circumstance we are now considering.

The “brethren” do not refer to the fact that Jesus was under legal obligation to go up to the feast. They recognise in Him the Christ, the Son of God, in harmony with ch. vi. 69, who as such was elevated above all prescriptions of the law. They do not derive their argument from the law, but only and entirely from the mission of Jesus, from the dignity of His person, which must secure its full acknowledgment in the very centre of the people. They manifest likewise their zeal for the honour and for the honourable recognition of Christ. They perceive correctly enough, that Jesus could not, and should not, limit His influence to an obscure corner of Galilee; and that the Saviour of the world must manifest Himself to the world. Not many days afterwards, Jesus set His own seal upon the correctness of this assumption; for He went up to the feast in Jerusalem, and there publicly taught in the temple. In “If Thou doest these things, show Thyself unto the world,” the *if* does not express any doubt; but it only points to the inference, that the one must necessarily draw the other after it. The *if* has the same force as in 1 John iv. 11: “If God hath thus loved us, we ought also to love one another;” Rom. xi. 21. “*Eἰ* itself,” says Winer, “retains the conditional signification *if*, even where, in point of meaning, it stands for *ἐπειδή*, since; the sentence is, so far as regards the expression, conditional, *if* (such being actually the case), and the categorical meaning does not

for the moment come into view." Jesus contradicted His own mission, and thwarted His own Messianic work, by keeping Himself concealed so long. For a whole year and a half He had not emerged from Galilee. The brethren rightly perceived that this state of things could not go on any longer. The position which they here lay down, that "there is no man that doeth anything in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly," Jesus Himself, in ch. xviii. 20, recognises as a sound one, and declares it to be a rule which He had followed. The error of the brethren—who set out with a right principle, that a continued separation of Jesus from the Temple, the house of God, the spiritual house of the whole nation, was morally impossible—lay simply and solely in this, that they attempted to prescribe to Jesus His time and hour. That they were so free in suggesting their thought, sprang from the fact that they knew Christ so familiarly after the flesh. Even Mary, in ch. ii. 4, was kept within her limits; and there, too, the *hour* was concerned.

It were like making a blind man judge of colours, to introduce into the life of faith a strict and rigorous logical consistency. To pretend to dictate to the Lord, to master the Master, was a grievous fault, and one into which we are still ever liable to fall, when He manifests Himself otherwise than we think we have a right to expect. But in the case of all the disciples, and even of the Apostles, it was necessary that the Spirit should be first received; for "the Holy Ghost was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified," ver. 39. We meet with many instances of infirmity among the Apostles which must appear incredible to one who does not know human nature. We have only to remember the word which Jesus, shortly before this narrative, was constrained to say to Peter when he, like these brethren here, was disposed to dictate to his Master (Matt. xvi. 23), "Get thee behind Me, Satan; thou art an offence unto Me: thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men;" and the request of the two sons of Zebedee, to sit one on the right hand and the other on the left of Jesus, Matt. xx. 20; and the contention of the Apostles for pre-eminence just before the institution of the Supper. As it regards the specific words, "Neither did they believe on Him," we must not forget that John, in ch. xx. 8, charges himself, and in ch.

xx. 27 his fellow-apostle Thomas, with unbelief ; nor that Jesus, shortly before, answered the Apostles' inquiry why they could not cast out the unclean spirit, by "because of your unbelief," and, indeed, included them with the unbelieving and perverse generation. That faith and unbelief are not terms of blank contrast, is shown by the expression, "I believe, help Thou mine unbelief ;" as also by John ii. 11, where it is said of the disciples, that they believed in Jesus after the miracle in Cana of Galilee—as if they had not believed on Him before, although, in ch. i. 51, Jesus had said to Nathanael, *Thou believest*. According to John xi. 15, the Apostles, who, as being Apostles, must have had faith already, are represented as being brought to faith by the resurrection of Lazarus. That the unbelief of the brethren must here be understood relatively, like the Saviour's charge of unbelief directed against all the Apostles, Matt. xvii. 20, is established by Acts i. 14, where we meet with the "brethren" of Jesus among the believers immediately after the resurrection. The notion that the light of faith arose upon them first through the resurrection of Christ, is without probability : for we see them in the midst of the circle of the believers, a circle with which Jesus had surrounded Himself during His earthly life ; and there is nothing to intimate that they had entered it later than the rest. Moreover, the resurrection of Christ was an event too recent for such an influence to be reasonably imputed to it.

It would be amongst the cousins of Jesus, rather than amongst the other Apostles, that we should have expected to find such immaturity of faith. Strictly parallel with the account of their relative unbelief, is the rank which they invariably held in the lists of the Twelve : they are everywhere placed at the end ; evidence that they were not till late such as justified their being called to the apostolical office, although we find them, ch. ii. 12, in the Lord's company at a very early period of His mission. They had more to overcome than the others had. It is to this that the Lord's word points, Matt. xiii. 57 : "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house." Not only here, but also on another occasion, Matt. xii. 46 and the parallels, they were disposed to dictate to our Lord.

Let it not be objected, that the words which Jesus said to

them scarcely suit the Apostles—"The world cannot hate you." We have no trace that the Jewish zeal of persecution had ever included the Apostles in its range. Everywhere Jesus Himself, and alone, is the object of it. "They hated Me *before* they hated you," ch. xv. 18, is an expression which indicates that there had been a time when their hatred was spent only upon Him. Their separation from the world was not yet complete. Whenever the disciples appeared elsewhere than in Christ's company, they had nothing to fear from the world. It would be otherwise in the future, when the Holy Ghost should be poured out upon them, and glorify Jesus in them, and when they should in His power testify of the world that its works were evil, ch. xv. 19, xvii. 14.

But it may be argued that the brethren of Jesus went up alone to Jerusalem, while Jesus, doubtless at the head of His twelve Apostles, went up some time afterwards. On this supposition, therefore, the brethren cannot have belonged to the apostolic circle. But how can it be proved that our Lord at that time had His twelve Apostles with him? The fact that Jesus, according to ver. 10, went up to the feast, "not openly, but as it were in secret," makes it improbable that He was accompanied on this journey by a train so numerous and so likely to excite attention. The only Evangelist who gives us any more detailed account of this journey,—Luke, in ch. ix. 51 seq.,—says nothing of any such accompaniment of the collective Apostles. It would appear rather, from his narrative, that the Lord had with Him only His most confidential disciples. In Jerusalem, at the feast, Jesus had His twelve Apostles round Him. On the way from Perea to Judea He walked from place to place at the head of the Twelve, Matt. xx. 17. Thus this passage furnishes no reason why we should recede from the results obtained from ch. ii. 12 in relation to the brethren of our Lord.

According to the opinion of the brethren, Jesus ought to go to Judea for this *among other reasons (καὶ)*, that His disciples might see the works which He did. These disciples were not the disciples of Jerusalem specifically, but the disciples generally. Only if His works were performed in the centre of the nation, where the whole of the people were gathered together at the feast, would they be visible to the whole generation of disciples.

What was done in a corner was visible only to individuals ; and even these had not all they desired in that respect : for they must have desired that the works of Jesus should be done in the fullest light of publicity, in view of the authorities, and before the wise and prudent, in order to silence the objection that Jesus could impose only on the masses, who could not test Him. A seal must be impressed upon the miracles of Galilee by the performance of similar miracles in Jerusalem. The objection that the Evangelist's expression is obscure, recoils upon the expositors who have said so. Wherever obscurity is charged upon John, it is invariably the result of want of depth in the expositor.

No man—the brethren say in ver. 4—doeth anything in secret, while he himself seeketh to be before the public. Jesus must, in harmony with His own assumptions as the Son of God and the King of Israel, seek publicity. He contradicted the purpose of His own mission by remaining long in private, by shutting Himself up in a corner, by persistently shunning the metropolis, where the thrones were set for judgment, Ps. cxxii., and which was the judicial tribunal for all the manifestations of the popular life. For eighteen months Jesus had not left Galilee. The brethren knew full well that such a state of things could not continue much longer. *Παρρησία* signified originally freedom of speech, and then generally a free and open nature : comp. xi. 54, xviii. 20, where Jesus admits the correctness of the principle laid down by the brethren, and asserts that He had always acted on it. The only mistake was the assumption of the brethren that Jesus must come forth from His retirement now; that is, at the specific time which they would prescribe to Him. “If Thou do these things”—the works of His Messianic vocation—“show Thyself to the world :” the universal theatre was, for the Jewish people, Jerusalem ; if Jesus appeared publicly there, He made Himself known to the world. Sin is no less a mystery than the divinity of Christ. The brethren, still lingering on the beginnings of their faith, had no presentiment of the depth and energy of the Pharisees' hatred to Christ. They were themselves convinced of His Divine mission. They knew Him to be in possession of the most glorious means to establish His credentials. They hoped, therefore, that if He would only show Himself to the world, He

would succeed in vanquishing the world's enmity, and probably in obtaining the recognition of the High Council.—On ver. 5, Heumann remarks : “They believed not on Him : that is, their faith in Him was not yet firm and strong enough ; it had yet to contend with unbelief.” This lower position as to faith revealed itself, not in their leaving it undecided whether or not the works of Jesus were really Messianic (Lücke), but simply and solely in this, that they would dictate to Jesus, and prescribe Him the time and hour. Living faith in Jesus as the Son of God shows itself in this, that it suffers Him to act and rule absolutely as He will.

Ver. 6. “Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come ; but your time is alway ready.”—We may compare with this, ch. ii. 4, where Jesus says to His mother, “Woman, what have I to do with thee ? Mine hour is not yet come.” As there, according to the context, the hour was the time appropriate to our Lord for lending help in the emergency, so here the *time* is that which was appropriate for Him to go to Judea, to appear there in full publicity, and to manifest Himself unto the world. The Jews sought to kill Jesus, ver. 1. Thus the time for showing Himself to the world was also the time of suffering,—the time of His departure, of the decease which Jesus must accomplish at Jerusalem. Like the *hour* in ch. ii. 4, and in John vii. 30, the “time” here points to Eccles. iii. 1, where time and hour are connected together : “To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.” The reference to this passage was an intimation that all the actions of Jesus were under the law of a Divine necessity. It was a folly that the brethren assumed the right to prescribe the period of a crisis of such universal significance. In these things Jesus could not regard His brethren upon earth, but only His Father in heaven. That here, as in the case of the *οὐπω ἥκει ἡ ὥρα μου*, the phrase was not the Evangelist's, but our Lord's, is shown by the *ὁ καιρός μου ἐγγύς ἔστι* in Matt. xxvi. 18 : comp. also Mark i. 15.—The reason of our Lord's regarding His time as not yet come, has been explained by some to be this, that He did not wish to show Himself in Jerusalem until the number of His Galilean dependants had become so great in Jerusalem, as to deter the Sanhedrim from laying hands on Him there. But we find no trace whatever of our Lord's having

made His Galilean friends His prop and defence in Jerusalem. Ver. 10 gives us the true reason why His hour was not yet come. Jesus would not enter the city suddenly, and in a manner provocative of excitement, and thus hasten the catastrophe. It was not at the Feast of Tabernacles, but at the following Passover, that He was to accomplish His decease; and there still remained much that was important both to be said and to be done. Thus it was expedient that He should go up to the Feast of Tabernacles, "not openly, but as it were in secret."

Ver. 7. "The world cannot hate you; but Me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil."—Jesus bore His witness not merely by His word, but by His whole life and work. Every glance at Him must have pierced the hearts of the degenerate rulers. With the brethren of Jesus, and with the Apostles generally, it was not so: in them the world saw much that bore affinity with itself.—Ver. 8. "Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up unto this feast; for My time is not yet full come." The Present, *ἀναβαίνω*, is to be carefully noted. His going up to the feast is not affirmed by Jesus, nor is it denied; it is left, so far as His words go, undetermined. It was below the majesty of Christ to give at that time a more definite explanation. The requirement of the brethren was to the effect that He should go up with them to the feast. Jesus contents Himself with repressing this assumption. If He had said, "Not now, but after some days," they might surely have imagined that their representations had produced some effect upon Him. It was precisely in the same way that our Lord acted towards His mother, who would have intruded into the matters of His vocation. He did not say to her that He would presently accomplish what she wished. How little merely "diplomatic" criticism avails generally, is shown here in particular. Instead of *οὐκ* before *ἀναβαίνω*, "the reading of most authorities" is *οὐπώ*. But this reading is manifestly an intentional change, introduced by such as thought they could thereby obviate the seeming contradiction upon which Porphyry and others had laid so much stress, charging the Lord with uncertainty and caprice. *Οὐπώ* does not harmonize with what precedes. If the Lord had intended definitely to intimate that He would go up later to the feast, He would have said, as we may suppose, "Go ye up *now* to this feast." If we take into

consideration the whole position in which the brethren stood with regard to Jesus, the style in which He spoke to them from the beginning, we shall be very far from thinking that He made them partakers of His secret, and admitted them to a privity with His design of going up at a later season to the feast. Such a confidence they had not deserved. He that exalteth himself shall be abased. Accordingly, we can do justice to the notion that there is here another specimen of John's want of precision in language; and to Chrysostom's supplementary *νῦν μεθ' ἵμων*.

Ver. 9. "When He had said these words unto them, He abode still in Galilee. 10. But when His brethren were gone up, then went He also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret."—That Jesus went up afterwards to the feast had no reference to the law of the Old Testament, from which He, as the Son of God, was free; comp. on ch. ii. 12. The right point of view is that from which the brethren spoke. Jesus must manifest Himself unto the world. That Jesus did not set out until after His brethren, was, as it were, another way of saying "not openly." The great mass of the people who went to the feast, entered Jerusalem before the first and great day of the festival. But this is not enough for the full explanation of the "not openly," etc. Jesus left His brethren behind, in order not to appear surrounded by the whole body of His Apostles, an accompaniment that could not fail to excite attention; and then He did not choose the ordinary way of the pilgrims, which led from Galilee through Perea, but took His own course through Samaria. The difficulties which encountered Him on this road, Luke ix. 51, etc., must have deterred most pilgrims. The way through Perea was, while somewhat farther, very much more pleasant. The *ώς* softens the *ἐν κρυπτῷ*. His journey only resembled one that was private: the same softening force of the *ώς* we meet with often elsewhere in the Gospel,—e.g. ch. i. 40, xi. 18. To travel in perfect incognito would have been inconsistent with Christ's dignity. Publicity was avoided, only so far as was required by His aim to avoid exciting any great stir, and to suppress all suspicion that He was thinking of the establishment of a kingdom.

Ver. 11. "Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, Where is he?"—The Jews are not here placed in antithesis to

the multitude of ver. 12 ; but the *Iουδαῖοι* represent the whole of the people, including the rulers, while the *οἱ χλωτοὶ* designate a particular portion of the people, the multitude in opposition to the rulers. And since we are not justified in making the Jews here specifically the rulers, or generally those who were unfriendly to Jesus, we cannot understand the *ἐκεῖνος*, He, in a contemptuous sense. It was said with a different feeling, by different people, with different tendencies. *'Εκεῖνος* occurs sometimes with an emphatic meaning, as “the celebrated, the illustrious one” (Buttmann, S. u. K.). Jesus was regarded as a prominent personage by all parties. The thoughts of all factions and sects were deeply stirred concerning Him. *'Εκεῖνος*, which occurs in this Gospel remarkably often, no less than seventy times, occurs thrice in the Apocalypse. This may at the first glance seem strange ; but it is the same with *οὗτος*, which is only found twice in the Apocalypse. Hence we see that the difference must be explained by the generic difference in the kind of writing, and learn how little is to be gained by a merely mechanical study in this department of criticism.

Ver. 12. “And there was much murmuring among the people concerning Him : for some said, He is a good man : others said, Nay ; but he deceiveth the people. 13. Howbeit no man spake openly of Him for fear of the Jews.”—Why it was only a *murmuring*, we learn from ver. 13. The *παρρησία*, which is denied, there forms the counterpart of the *γογγυσμός* here. They did not dare to represent aloud and boldly their opinions, because the legitimate authorities had given no definitive utterance. Even they who felt in unison with the generally known enmity of the rulers, shrank from bluntly avowing their sentiments : partly because a change of mind on the part of the rulers was possible (comp. ver. 26) ; partly, and especially, because a vigorous assertion of open opinion, as such, and apart from the substance of that opinion, would have been regarded as an aggression upon the domain of the Pharisaic omnipotence. The people were not supposed to form any independent judgment. If the Pharisees had allowed that public sentiment to express itself when favourable to themselves, they would have exposed themselves to the effects of all the capricious changes to which that public sentiment was liable. So in our earlier empire, oppressed by the

burden of despotism, political movements in favour of the government were no more open or tolerated than those which were opposed to it. The spiritual slavery in which the Pharisaic party held the people, is illustrated here in a very remarkable manner. That even the pharisaically-minded did not dare to give free utterance to their thoughts, is a circumstance that could not have been invented ; it is a trait which was derived only from reality. The testimony of Josephus agrees perfectly in the general with our view of the Pharisaic oppressions ; *e.g.* in the work on the Jewish War, I. v. 2, he says of Alexandria : “She ruled the rest, and the Pharisees ruled her.” They had all things in their hand ; they persecuted and delivered, they bound and loosed whom they would. According to the Archæol. 18. 1. 2, among the Pharisees themselves the younger durst not contradict the elder.—*Good* is often used in the Old Testament for well-disposed. So, in 1 Sam. ii. 26, it is said of Samuel. In Prov. ii. 20, xiv. 29, the good are parallel with the righteous. In Eccles. ix. 2, the good as such are opposed to the sinners. On the “he deceiveth the people,” Lampe remarks : “They thus justify their scheming to put Jesus to death, because such seducers of the people were adjudged by the law to die, Deut. xiii. 6.” Augustine : *Dictum est hoc ad eorum solatium, qui postea prædicantes verbum Dei, futuri erant ut seductores et veraces, 2 Cor. vi. 8.*—For fear of the Jews : The Individual was afraid of the Whole. The term *Jews* here also signifies the mass of the people ; but the Pharisees, especially the rulers, were the soul of this mass. Fear of the Jews was the power which restrained the tongues of the well-disposed : testimony also how far from consummate was the faith of these likewise. Perfect faith casts out fear.

Ver. 14. “Now, about the midst of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.”—Quesnel : “Here, then, the moment was come, the crisis appointed of the Father, which Jesus waited for, that He might declare Himself to the priests.” It does not mean literally the midmost day of the feast : all the days were “in the midst of the feast,” which fell between the first and the last. Bengel supposes, that the day on which Jesus entered into the temple to teach was a Sabbath : *Die Sabbati frequens præ cæteris medii festi diebus erat auditorium, et opportunus de Sabbato sermo, ver. 22.*—Ver. 15. “And the

Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters (Scripture), having never learned?" *Γράμματα*, of themselves, meant the sciences, *literæ* generally; and the term owed its use to the fact that writings, read and written, were the foundation of all learning, Acts xxvi. 24. But, because among the Jews all science had reference to holy Scripture, the word *γράμματα* here is in reality identical with the *ιερὰ γράμματα* of 2 Tim. iii. 15. The "having never learned," had, so to speak, an official meaning: "inasmuch as he has never been in our high schools;" for only in these, according to the common opinion of the time, could any real knowledge be obtained (Cod. Sota in Lampe: *Etsi quis in Scriptura et Mischna versatus est, neque tamen sapientibus operam dedit, is plebeius est*). That Jesus had never frequented those schools, they very well knew; for he was a well-known person, ch. vi. 41 (Grotius: *Nemo præceptorum in discipulorum suorum grege eum viderat*). The marvelling (comp. Acts iv. 13) could have existed only if they failed to recognise who Jesus was. It must cease as soon as they should recognise in Christ the true Son of God. But, on the other hand, their marvelling might become the way and preparation for faith. Therefore our Lord offers them the key for the explanation of the wonderful fact.

Ver. 16. "Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me."—We have to compare Deut. xviii. 18, where God says, concerning the great Prophet afterwards to be sent, "I will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him." If that prophecy were here fulfilled, the fact must lose all its strangeness.—Ver. 17. "If any man will do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself." What Jesus said in ver. 18 was not a mere assertion. We may discern the reason of it in this, that it would make the fact of ver. 15 self-intelligible,—a fact for which the Jews, as their marvelling showed, had at least no other explanation. However, it was only appropriate that other evidence should also be appealed to. And foremost among other demonstrations must be this, that the Divine mission of Jesus approved itself to every one who was found walking in God's ways. To do the will of God, is only another expression for that which is recorded in Luke i. 6 of Zachariah and Elisa-

beth : “ They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.” Doing the will of God cannot refer to any particular point; it embraces the whole domain of morals, and especially the grander mental requirements of the love of God and man. We may compare, in the Old Testament, Deut. x. 12, “ And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God *require* of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul ?” and Micah vi. 8, “ He hath showed thee, O man, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God ?” In the New Testament, see Matt. vii. 21, and ver. 23, where *ἐργάζεσθαι τὴν ἀνομίαν* is the antithesis of doing the will of the Father in heaven ; xii. 50 ; Luke xii. 47 ; John ix. 31, where to have the fear of God and doing His will are connected ; and 1 Thess. iv. 3. In Eph. ii. 3, the opposite of doing the will of God is doing the will of the flesh and of the mind. It is not said simply, “ he that doeth the will of God,” but “ he that *willeth* to do the will of God.” If it be so that the doing is impaired by much imperfection, yet the fundamental direction of the will must tend to perfect conformity with the will of God ; the law of God must be the joy and delight of the heart ; and to satisfy its requirements must be its meditation day and night : comp. Ps. i. 2, cxix. The emphasis laid upon the *willing* here is opposed to the emphasis laid upon *knowing* by the Jews of that day. The prerogative of the Jews to be monopolists of the knowledge of the will of God, was set aside. Beyond that, there must be the most decisive inclination to do the will of God when known ; the will of man must entirely and absolutely coincide with the will of God. The mere concert between knowledge and the will of God is an insufficient harmony. Anton : “ He who would cultivate the *γνῶναι* (understanding), must also learn to amend his *θέλειν*, his willing. He who omits this latter, has nothing but a blind, foolish, evil-disposed nature. The people act as if they *could* not understand such things. It were better if they said, We *will* not understand them.” Calvin points to the fact, that the words contain a concealed condemnation of those who heard, a disclosure of the secret perverseness, etc., of their

disposition, which kept them from access to Christ : Uno simul oblique illos perstringet. Nam unde fit, ut discernere nequeant, nisi quod rectæ intelligentiæ caput ipsos deficit, pietas scil. et studium obsequendi Deo. They came with a long series of stately arguments against Christ. He points to the fact, that all that was mere hypocrisy and idle words. The real reason of their conduct lay in the evil disposition of their hearts. Grotius : Sicut oculi de coloribus tum demum recte judicant, cum nullo pravo humore suffusi sunt. To the willing to do the will of God in this passage, corresponds, in ch. viii. 47, the being *of God*. He whose will coincides with the will of God, is of God, because such harmony can be found only in a spirit to which God has communicated Himself. The antithesis of willing to do the will of God, is the working evil of ch. iii. 20, with which the doing the truth of ver. 21 is parallel. To be willing to do the will of God, was a state and condition possible only within the limits of the covenant people. Only to them was opportunity afforded of knowing that will ; of attaining that knowledge which is necessarily presupposed in the being willing to do it. Comp. Rom. ii. 18, *γινώσκεις τὸ θέλημα . . . κατηχούμενος ἐκ τοῦ νόμου* : only under the law are those higher influences felt which can evoke that willingness ; comp. on ch. iii. 21. The Gentiles, after the example of Cornelius, could attain to that willing readiness only through connection with the covenant people.

Whosoever would lead souls to Christ—this is the practical result of our passage—should not tarry long about the specious arguments with which the natural man seeks to disguise the hateful perversion of his state of will ; he should, above all things, strive to excite this willingness to do the will of God. Knowledge will then spring up of itself ; the man will then be ashamed of the hypocrisy and the delusion by which he sought to transfer the purely subjective guilt of his opposition from himself to the object of his opposition. But why is it that the divinity of the doctrine of Christ is at once to be perceived, when there is simply a sincere will to do the will of God ? The will of God is, for example, that man should perceive his misery and seek the forgiveness of his sins. Whoever has hidden this will of God in his heart, will with great joy receive the doctrine of Christ concerning His own eternal divinity, and the atonement

which has its foundation in that divinity. Whosoever, on the contrary, gilds his own misery, and indulges in pride, must by this teaching of Christ be offended in the inmost secret of his soul. The will of God is, that we should love Him with all our soul, and with all the powers of our being. He who desires to fulfil this will, must with rejoicing seek the way to Christ, in order to find in Him the death of his lusts and passions, which the love of God must mortify and destroy. He, on the other hand, who is untroubled about the will of God, nourishes and cherishes these lusts and passions, and thereby loses the very key to the doctrine of Christ: he cannot make a beginning with Jesus, whose high utterances concerning Himself seem to him no better than mere pretensions. As the exemplar of perfection, as the living ideal of holiness, Christ must be dear and precious to all who desire to do the will of God; to all who desire it not, He must be hateful. He not only bears witness by His word; He testifies by His whole being against the world, that the works thereof are evil, ver. 7. He who will do these works must make it his great endeavour to disembarrass himself of that burdensome testimony, of that fatal embodiment of his conscience, by discrediting the witness to whom the *homines bonæ voluntatis* look up with hearty and longing love. That holds good in the fullest degree which was said in Wisd. of Sol. ch. ii. 12-14, concerning the relation of the ungodly to the ideal person of the righteous,—an ideal which was realized first in Christ: “Let us lie in wait for the righteous; because he is not for our turn, and he is clean contrary to our doings: he upbraideth us with our offending the law, and objecteth to our infamy the transgressions of our education. He professeth to have the knowledge of God; and he calleth himself the child of the Lord. He was made to reprove our thoughts.” In the discourses of Christ the old man is everywhere drawn out of his hiding-place, and exhibited in all his abominable vileness. Take, for example, the Sermon on the Mount, the conversation with Nicodemus, or ch. vi., where Jesus makes all life depend on the eating of His flesh and blood, and thus absolutely decrees the natural man to death. This is very agreeable to all those who will to do the will of God, and who therefore—what is inseparably bound up with the other—hate the old man. But, on the other hand, it offends and exasperates those whose desire is

to abide in the old nature of the old man. “New birth,”—how hateful a word to the natural man!

This saying further shows what we must think of those who oppose “morality” to faith in the historical Christ. Every man is immoral or unmoral in the same degree as he is estranged from faith in the “historical Christ.” The virtues in which he probably seems to be rich, become, when closely scanned, shining sins. What Bengel says is true : Patris doctrina et filii doctrina eadem. Qui ergo consensionem cum voluntate Patris habet, doctrinam Filii agnoscat.

Ver. 18. “He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory : but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.”—In formal connection with the “of myself” in ver. 17, the Lord points to a second way in which conviction of the divinity of His mission may be obtained. What was meant by seeking his own honour, the rulers of the Jews might discern in themselves, and all the rest of the Jews in the rulers. The receiving honours one of another, and not seeking the honour that comes from God alone, ch. v. 44, comp. xii. 43, was then, as it is in all times of apostasy, when the love of God has grown cold, a fearfully wasting disease. Even His enemies were constrained to bear testimony to the Saviour, that this disease was not in Him. “Master,” said the Pharisees, in Matt. xxii. 16, to Jesus, “we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man ; for thou regardest not the person of men ;” probably with allusion to the very words of Christ in our present passage. That Jesus did not seek His own honour, but the honour of Him that sent Him, had from the beginning been confirmed by the relation which He had assumed towards the powers that regulated the popular life. This relation was that of the most express and unflinching opposition. But he who would receive honour must *give* honour, must flatter the spirit of the times, and must humble himself before its most prominent leaders and representatives. Had Jesus so acted, the Jews would never have sought to put Him to death. The saying before us gives us the standard by which all the ministers of the Church are now and ever to be judged. In its sense Paul says, 1 Thess. ii. 4, “We thus speak, not as pleasing men, but God ;” and in Gal. i. 10, “If I yet please men, I should not be the servant of

Christ."—The opposite of the truth is the lie, 1 John ii. 27. The opposite of the true man is the liar and the deceiver: comp. 2 Cor. vi. 8, ὡς πλάνοι, καὶ ἀληθεῖς, as deceivers and yet true, Matt. xxvii. 63. Not to be true is, at the same time, *unrighteousness*, since truth is an obligation to our neighbour, especially in religious concerns, where salvation and perdition are involved: comp. Isa. xli. 26, where he that speaketh the truth is defined to be a righteous man.

Ver. 19. "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill Me?"—The Lord, after He had adduced the evidences of His own Divine mission, occupies Himself with obviating the objection against it which had been derived from His violation of the Sabbath commandment; comp. ch. v. 9: He that places himself in opposition to Moses, cannot be of God. The Lord formally meets the charge by a countercharge. Those who set Moses against Him, were themselves in gross discord with Moses. But vers. 21–24 show very plainly that the countercharge is only matter of form, and that the Lord's real object was to obviate the objection. With the "Moses gave you the law," we may compare Deut. xxxiii. 4, "Moses commanded us a law," where Moses himself speaks of himself, making himself objective from the position of the people. "None of you keepeth the law," becomes positive, and is proved, in what follows: "Why go ye about to kill Me?" The expression was not one of hyperbole. The guilt was in the most proper sense a national one, in which individual men either actively participated, or passively by indifference and non-intervention. If the spirit of the law had been living and active in them, all Israel would, as in Judg. xx. 1, have risen up as one man against such blasphemy. "Thou shalt not kill," was a commandment which made its strong appeal so soon as it became clear, as what followed made it clear, that the charge brought against Christ so vehemently was an unfounded charge. The law everywhere breathes the deadliest abhorrence of murder. "Keep thou far from a false matter," we read in Ex. xxiii. 7, "and the innocent and righteous slay thou not." According to Deut. xix. 10, the innocent blood which was shed in the land of the Lord brought bloodguiltiness upon all the people. Just at the threshold of the giving of the law, Cain's act was exhibited as a warning

example to inspire horror. But here the theory in question was not murder in its ordinary form ; the matter concerned was the entering into a murderous combination against Him in reference to whom Moses had said in the early revelation, “ Whosoever will not hearken unto My words which He shall speak in My name, I will require it of him,” Deut. xviii. 19. A more direct and determinate opposition to Moses could not be imagined.

Ver. 20. “ The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil : who goeth about to kill thee ? ”—The multitude did not speak thus out of ignorance of the rulers’ designs : that they sought to kill Jesus was a notorious fact ; comp. ver. 25, on which Anton says : “ God ordained it that these should presently come and say, Is not this he whom they seek to kill ? These blab out their secret, so that they are straightway convicted, and are made *αὐτοκατάκριτοι*. They would not say it in words, but it is seen as clear as day.” That is the way of the world : plain facts, which on other occasions they are proud of, they shrink from and disguise when they are alleged as charges from which they cannot otherwise escape. “ Thou hast a devil,” was the chorus of the Jews when they were pierced in their consciences, and had no other means of defence at hand : comp. ch. viii. 48, 52, x. 20. There they said, “ He hath a devil, and *is mad*.” This passage, however (comparing ver. 21), shows that it was not a mere phrase when the Jews declared Jesus to be possessed by an unclean spirit. In any case he was in a disturbed condition of mind ; but they attributed the disturbance to possession by an evil spirit. The very wickedness of this allegation shows that the “ people” here are not to be regarded as the opposite of the “ Jews ;” we must not suppose that they were well affected, and unacquainted with the murderous designs of the rulers,—against which notion vers. 21 seq. are also decisive. “ A preacher,” says Quesnel, “ must not expect to find himself justified before the people of the world. The most moderate complaint is, in their view, a new offence.”

Ver. 21. “ Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel thereat.”—Jesus ignores their interruption (Grotius : When He was reviled, He reviled not again, 1 Pet. ii. 23, ad convitum docendo respondet), to show that it had nothing to do with the matter, and was a mere evasion. He gives the ground of His countercharge, and at the same

time removes the charge out of the way. “One work;” that is, which comes into consideration with regard to the question then before them. Amongst so many excellent works which Jesus had shown them from the Father (ch. x. 32), there was but one upon which they could find their charge: all the others were, by their silent admission, unimpeachable. The very fact of this matter of offence being an isolated case, made it extremely probable that the offence was only *assumed*. Θαυμάζειν here signifies an angry astonishment: comp. the ἐμοὶ χολάτε, Are ye angry at Me? in the following verse. Διὰ τοῦτο was by the fathers almost universally connected with the next verse; and this has found, even in modern times, some defenders, who appeal to the fact that John always elsewhere uses θαυμάζειν either absolutely or with the mere accusative, and that he is in the habit of beginning and not closing a sentence with διὰ τοῦτο,—reasons which, as being merely empirical, have no decisive force. These facts do no more than establish the rule; they do not exclude exceptions to it. But, in itself, the connection of διὰ τοῦτο with what follows is not inadmissible. It would then express that the allusion in vers. 22, 23 referred to the objection taken by the Jews: “Therefore know ye, or, I say unto you.” In this sense διὰ τοῦτο is used in Matt. xviii. 23: διὰ τοῦτο (λέγω ὑμῖν), ὡμοιώθη ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν. But the connection with what precedes, as first recommended by Theophylact, is most obvious; especially when we observe that in Mark vi. 6 θαυμάζειν is used with διὰ: comp. τὶ θαυμάζετε ἐπὶ τούτῳ, Acts iii. 12. Decisive in favour of this connection is ch. v. 16, διὰ τοῦτο ἐδίωκον τὸν Ἰησοῦν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι; and ver. 18, διὰ τοῦτο οὖν μᾶλλον ἐζήτουν αὐτὸν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἀποκτεῖναι, where διὰ τοῦτο refers, as it does in our present passage, to the position which the Jews occupied towards Christ as the result of this work. The assertion, that “John inexactly introduces the ὅχλος as receiving the answer, whereas the discourse continues addressed to the *rulers*,” rests upon the unfounded distinction, in ver. 15, between the “people” and the “Jews.”

Ver. 22. “Moses gave you circumcision; not that it is of Moses, but of the fathers; and ye on the Sabbath-day circumcise a man.”—We read in Lev. xii. 3, in an ordinance connected with the uncleanness of women: “And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.” But this

simple mention in passing, Christ could not certainly have had in His eye. He pointed rather to the communication of the institution of circumcision in the course of Moses' history. Now the institution was part of the Torah, the Law. And, after the law was given, the obligation of circumcision was based upon that law; so much so, that it would not have been binding if it had not been found in the Torah. This was the codification of all the revelations of God. Whatever, in the pre-Mosaic times, had permanent significance, must needs be taken up into the Mosaic law. And in this sense it might be said that circumcision was of Moses. Since the time of Moses it might be said to have been given by him. But the reason of its being here referred to Moses was, *that Moses was here brought into the lists as against Christ.* This same Moses, by the law of circumcision, invaded the Sabbath. According to the law, circumcision must always take place on the eighth day; it must therefore, under some circumstances, come into collision with the Sabbath. Consequently, the Lord showed that the Sabbath commandment must be taken with some allowance; that the ordinance was directed against selfishness, which would turn everything to personal advantage, and not against the help and labour of charity. But in an historical interest, and probably with a glance at the adversaries, and their question, “How knoweth this man the Scripture, having never learned?” (they would have been very well pleased if they could have alleged against Him even the semblance of ignorance in this matter), it is further said, that the reference of circumcision to Moses was not intended to deny its patriarchal derivation. To make the reason of the parenthetical clause this, that the value of circumcision was enhanced by its greater age, is out of the question. “Not that” stands for “the matter is not as if” (*οὐχ οὖτος*, Rom. ix. 3): comp. Phil. iv. 11, 17; John vi. 46; 2 Cor. i. 24. Against the supposition that “I say, I think” is to be implied (Winer), the passage first quoted is decisive. ‘Εκ serves to define the originator. Circumcision goes back to God; but primarily it was introduced into Israel by the patriarchs, who, on the ground of the Divine appointment, impressed upon their descendants the inviolable observance of this rite.—Ver. 23. “If a man on the Sabbath-day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken, are ye angry at

Me because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath-day?" Kurtz rightly observes (Hist. of the Old Cov. i. 238, Clark's Transl.): "Circumcision, which is to remove the growth of nature—that which is unholy and impure—from the principle and source of life, is, so to speak, to extend its power and influence through all the ramifications of life. It implies the obligation of withdrawing all the other relations of life from the dominion of nature, of circumcising the foreskin of the heart, of the lips, of the ear, etc.;" and we would add—what is the main concern, for the obligation is only secondary—assumes and confirms a state of grace to that end: comp. Deut. xxx. 6. Meanwhile, true as this is, by circumcision only that individual member was *primarily* healed on which it was performed, and the selection of which is explained by Ps. li. 7, Job xiv. 4. It was translated from the natural condition of impurity (the Sept. render, in Lev. xix. 23, *הַלְּשׁוֹן*, foreskin, by *ἀκαθαρσία*; according to the Arabic, this was the fundamental meaning of *לְשָׁׁׁן*: comp. Gesenius in the Thesaurus, *sub voce*) into that of purity, of *ἄγιασμός* and of *τιμή*, 1 Thess. iv. 4. But the healing act of Jesus referred *directly* to the whole man. We must not, however, infer from the juxtaposition of circumcision and the physical healing of Jesus, that circumcision also had a physically sanitary significance: the point of comparison is more general than that. Circumcision bears in the law a purely religious character. The sanitary use of it was an invention of later times, in order to obviate the mockery of those who would not admit its religious character.—Ver. 24. "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." "*Οψις*"—which in the New Testament John alone uses, ch. xi. 44, Rev. i. 16—signifies, in his phraseology, only the countenance. And that this meaning must be adhered to here, is shown by the original passage of the Old Testament, Lev. xix. 15, "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour;" and Deut. i. 17, "Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great;" Deut. xvi. 19; Mal. ii. 9. To the *κρίνειν κατ' ὄψιν* here corresponds the *βλέπειν εἰς πρόσωπον ἀνθρώπων*, in Mark xii. 14. The countenance represents the person as such. They had judged

according to the countenance, when they had shunned to come forward against Moses with his beaming face ; but, on the other hand, they condemned Christ, standing before them in humble guise, “without form and beauty.” The second part of the saying rests upon Zech. vii. 9, “Judge the judgment of truth ;” Sept. κρίμα δίκαιον κρίνετε. Anton is perfectly right in saying, moreover, that the real reason of their hard judgment of Christ was not zeal for the law : “The people cared nothing here for the law. The mask is put on with great readiness, only for the sake of escaping, and keeping Christ far enough off.”

Vers. 25, 26. “Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he whom they seek to kill ? But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ ?”—They of Jerusalem are not placed here in opposition or antithesis to the Jews of ver. 15, or the multitude of ver. 20 ; but John points to the fact, that Jesus in the whole of this scene had to do mainly with inhabitants of Jerusalem. It was quite natural that these should play the *primas partes* in a gathering within the temple ; especially at the Feast of Tabernacles, to which the strangers came up in much smaller numbers than to the Passover. The allegation in ver. 19 applies rather to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Before a Galilean public Jesus would certainly not have uttered it in so general terms ; but in capital cities sin is wont to become concentrated, and to come earlier to its maturity : comp. Micah i. 5 ; Isa. i. 21. So with the gross δαιμόνιον ἔχεις. Αληθῶς, actually, indicates that the matter was hardly credible ; and to this corresponds the following verse.

Ver. 27. “But we know this man whence he is : but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence He is.”—We are not to suppose that they would maintain the rejection of Christ even against the rulers ; but they adduce a reason to prove the impossibility of the assumption that the rulers had acknowledged Jesus as Christ. The words “no man knoweth whence He is,” cannot certainly have been intended to deny the derivation of the Messiah from David and from Bethlehem ; that was too expressly attested by the Scripture, and recognised by the whole nation : comp. ver. 42 ; Matt. ii. 5, 6. They intimate, in perfect harmony with the Old Testament, that the Messiah had, besides His historical origin and life, a super-

natural manner of existence; and that there was something in His manifestation which should absolutely transcend all human elements, and be past reduction to human standards. A manifestation or personality concerning which no man knows whence it is, must be such as goes absolutely beyond the region of natural causes and effects;<sup>1</sup> and it is thus that the Messiah was always exhibited in the prophecies of the Old Testament: e.g. in Micah, ch. v. 4, we read, "And He shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord His God;" in Isa. ix. 6 He receives the high names, "Wonderful, Counsellor, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace;" in Zech. ix. 10 He is represented as "ruling from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth;" according to Dan. vii. 13, He cometh with the clouds of heaven; and according to Mal. iii. 1, as the Lord to His temple. Of this wonderful nature, not explicable according to natural causes, they could not discern the mystery. All appeared to them to be after the ordinary manner, and even to fall below the highest standard of mortal greatness: comp. ch. vi. 62. The only failure in their reasoning was this, that they were utterly incapable of detecting His concealed glory. What they sought must have been there, and was there; but they lacked, through their guilt, the eye to perceive it. (Luther: "They must know, indeed, that He would have a marvellous course, as His mother had been a marvellous woman, and He had had a strange and marvellous advent.") This concealment of the glory of Christ was as abundantly declared in prophecy as its *reality* was. We read in Isa. liii. 2: "He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him." This concealment of His glory was necessary, in order that the heart alone might be able to find Him, and they might be kept from Him whose eyes had not been opened by a burning desire for salvation. So God conceals Himself in nature, that He may in nature be found only by those who seek Him. In reference to the cause of the offence which the Jews here took, Anton well remarks: "It all came from this, that these men would not give themselves thorough pains about the

<sup>1</sup> Lampe: Cœlestis ejus origo, a Prophetis prædicta, in Catecheseos antiquæ reliquiis ut occultum rationi humanæ mysterium considerabatur.

Messiah. They thought, if He comes, He comes; if we get to know Him, we get to know Him. If anything depends upon it, it will be sure to come. And yet they said, each one, I have done my part; I have stood there a quarter of an hour, and yet I have not been able to lay hold of it! Yea, verily, it was only right that thou shouldst not lay hold of it. Bow down thy knees, deal with God as God. Thou hast no earnestness, no humility, and no perseverance."

Ver. 28. "Then cried Jesus in the temple, as He taught, saying, Ye both know Me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of Myself, but He that sent Me is true, whom ye know not. 29. But I know Him: for I am from Him, and He hath sent Me."—In the first Gospels Jesus only once *cries*: His last cry upon the cross, Matt. xxvii. 50; Mark xv. 37. The affectionate John, especially adapted by his own tenderness for the expression of passion, often mentions the crying of Jesus: comp. ver. 37, ch. xii. 44; and, in harmony with this, the Angel in the Revelation, who represents Jesus, is introduced often as crying aloud, ch. vii. 2, x. 3, xviii. 2. Anton justly says: "A pitiful and piercing cry. Thus did the Lord pour out His grief at their blinded condition and dark conduct." It is the same passion which is heard in the words, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem," etc.—"Ye know Me, and whence I am." Jesus simply repeats the words of His adversaries, that He may connect with them the direct opposite. In substance it is equivalent to, "ye think or assert that ye know Me, and know whence I am." We must not suppose, with many expositors, that Jesus here attributes to His opponents an external knowledge of Himself. How much such an exposition must insinuate into the words, Augustine shows.<sup>1</sup> The Jews had pretended absolutely to know Jesus. Had opposition to this been intended, the limitation of their knowledge to its own narrow sphere would have been more definitely expressed.—"And I am not come of Myself." They restricted Christ entirely to the earth; on the other hand, He maintains His own divine mission. "But He that sent Me is

<sup>1</sup> In his commentary on the passage: Excepto virginis parti, totum noverant in Jesu, quod ad hominem pertinet: facies ipsius nota erat, patria ipsius nota erat, genus ipsius notum erat, ubi natus est sciebatur. Recte ergo dixit: et me nostis et unde sim scitis, secundum carnem et effigiem hominis, quam gerebat: secundum autem divinitatem: Et a me ipso, etc.

true." *Αληθινός*, true, points to the fact that in God there is no distinction between idea and actuality—that with Him there is no mere semblance. But God would enter into the mere domain of semblance, of truthless and unreal being, if Christ were not sent of Him; for He had by His works impressed upon Him His seal. Instead of *ἀληθινός*, we might read *ἀληθής*. If God is not *ἀληθής*, He ceases to be *ἀληθινός* for only the God who practises truth is the true God. The reference to the legitimation of His pretensions by act, as it is contained in these words, sets aside the semblance of Christ's having opposed an assertion by an assertion. Christ is wont to appeal to this actual warranty of facts, when His opponents limit Him to earth, and deny His connection with heaven: comp. ch. v. 36, "The works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me;" and ch. vi. 27, "For Him hath God the Father sealed;" ch. x. 25, 32, xiv. 11, xv. 24; 1 John v. 10. —In the words, "whom ye know not," many think they find a reason assigned why the Jews knew not Christ. Calvin: *Significat non mirum esse, si notus Judæis non sit, qui Deum ignorant: nam hoc est recte sapiendi initium, in Deum respicere.* Others unfold the meaning thus: That they know not God they show by this, that they know not Him whom God hath sent, although they falsely pretend to know Him. We cannot know God without at the same time knowing Christ. But it is better to explain it thus: Whom ye know not, because ye, by rejecting Him whom God hath sent, have broken down the bridge; and thus the words declare the sad and tragical result of the misknowledge of Christ. To this points ch. viii. 19: "Ye neither know Me nor My Father: if ye had known Me, ye would have known My Father also." Comp. on ch. v. 37, i. 18, vi. 46, xiv. 6; Matt. xi. 27. We cannot err touching Christ without at the same time erring concerning God, and thus becoming godless. This is the deadly abyss into which those are plunged who thoughtlessly separate themselves from Christ. Rationalism has had to find this true, even as Judaism had. Like Judaism, it wanted to hold fast God, while it abandoned the historical Christ. Like Judaism, it assumed the guise of turning away from Christ out of love to God. But how quickly did it tread the path from Deism to Pantheism and

Atheism; to show that the God whom it opposed to Christ, was in truth God no more.—In the “I know Him, for I am from Him, and He hath sent Me,” lies the reason of the fact, that the failure to know Christ, on the part of the Jews, had for its lamentable result the failure to know God. No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him.

Ver. 30. “Then they sought to take Him: but no man laid hands on Him, because His hour was not yet come.”—The Jews were exasperated because Christ absolutely denied to them, but appropriated Himself, God; that God whose interests and affairs they asserted to be in their hands. *Πιάσαι*, to seize, is the watchword of the Jews throughout this entire section, vers. 32, 44, viii. 20, x. 39, xi. 57. Matthew and Mark have instead *κρατεῖν*, which John does not use with such a meaning. Rev. xix. 20 connects its phraseology with this of the Gospel. There the beast was *taken* who trod in the Jews’ footsteps in the endeavour to take Christ (in His members). On “His hour was not yet come,” comp. ch. ii. 4, vii. 6. Here the connection shows that the hour was the time for Jesus to be seized: comp. ch. xviii. 12. “His hour was not yet come,” is said again in ch. viii. 20. The words are supremely full of comfort for all the servants of Christ: as they could not touch a hair of the Master’s head, so they cannot touch a hair of the servants’ head until their hour is come. If this be so, they may be of good courage. And even when their hour is come, they are not in the hands of men, but in the hands of God. It is quite alien and inappropriate to say, that “the fear of that portion of the people who were more friendly to Jesus restrained His enemies.” What restrained them was rather the fidelity of their own consciences, under a Divine influence. When the hour was come, God caused that Divine influence to cease, and said again, as He said before the flood, “My Spirit shall no longer judge in man.” Then they seized and killed Christ, and in Him themselves.

Ver. 31. “And many of the people believed on Him, and said, When Christ cometh, will He do more miracles than these which this man hath done?”—Amidst the waste of unbelief there was a refreshing breath of faith; a pledge for the Church of all ages, that her work shall never be entirely lost,

that she never need say, “I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nought and in vain.” *Humiles et pauperes salvos faciebat Dominus*, says Augustine; He saved them then, and will save them in all ages. “Therefore we should scatter the seed, and patiently wait until in the course of time the fruit appears” (Calvin). The “many” here were the men who had the right will in ch. vii. 17. The conclusion of their argument was: “This must then be the Christ;” and in their speaking of Christ as yet to come, they place themselves in the position of the gainsayers: comp. ver. 27. The fact that Christ, when He should come, could do no greater works than His, was the proof to them that He must have already come.

Ver. 32. “The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning Him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him.”—The Pharisees are placed at the head, because the spiritual impulse proceeded from them; the high priests follow, because the sending was their official prerogative: the *ἀρχιεπεῖς*, the high priests, with the other most eminent priests, the presidents of the classes of the priesthood, as the most prominent members of the high council. In ver. 45 the order is inverted. So also in ch. xi. 57. In ch. xii. 10, we have merely the *ἀρχιεπεῖς*. The more concise specification of the council is found only exceptionally in the first Gospels: Mark xiv. 10, where the fuller description had just preceded, and xv. 10, 11; Luke xxiii. 4, 23. The more full designation is throughout the common one.

Ver. 33. “Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto Him that sent Me. 34. Ye shall seek Me, and shall not find Me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come.”—Our Lord’s words are not addressed to the servants of the high priests, but—on occasion of the mission from them, thus announced—to those with whom all has here to do, “the Jews,” “the people,” representing the whole mass. This is shown by the words, pointing to the people generally, “am I with you,” “ye shall seek Me.” He gives them to understand how foolish it was that they should not better use His now brief presence with them; that they should desire to put away from them Him who would quite soon enough leave them, removing from them with Himself all salvation, so that they should have abundant reason in painful longing to

wish Him back again. (Grotius: *Renuntiaturus legationem, quasi dicat: videte quomodo tractandus sit vobis legatus.*) In the words, “ye shall seek Me, and shall not find Me,” we are directed first to Amos viii. 12, “They shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it,” though they were then driving the prophet of God with contumely out of the land. Then to Prov. i. 28, where Solomon makes insulted Wisdom say, “Then (when the consequences of their contempt fall upon them) shall they call, and I will not answer; they shall seek Me, and shall not find Me.” (Michaelis: *Supponuntur autem hic, qui nonnisi ex sensu incumbentis mali, a quo liberari velint, sapientiam quærunt.* Si enim sincere ac serio quærerent, inventuri omnino essent. Ewald: In vers. 28–31, it is said that they shall in the hour of danger diligently seek despised wisdom; but, because they seek merely in anxiety and confusion, to no purpose.) The words, “they that seek me shall find me,” Prov. viii. 17, cannot be fulfilled here, because the seeking was not genuine. The passage in Proverbs is brought into still plainer parallel with this in John, when we observe that the Wisdom there spoken of is personal, the Angel of the Lord, who appeared incarnate in Christ: comp. on ch. i. The passage is not at all appropriate to wisdom in the abstract. All points to a *person* who can both help and destroy. And that Christ refers specifically to this passage is all the more obvious, because He is elsewhere exhibited as Wisdom manifest in the flesh. Then we must compare also ch. v. 2 seq. of the Song of Solomon. The bride, the daughter of Sion, had refused or delayed to admit the bridegroom, the heavenly Solomon: when she would afterwards open to him, it is too late—he is gone; she cannot find him, but the watchmen find *her*—the ministers of the Divine anger. It is said in ver. 6, “I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone; I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.” That we must not limit the quotation to Prov. i. 28, but must include the passage in the Song of Solomon, is shown by the *ὑπάγω*, I go away, I withdraw, borrowed from it: this word in John’s account of the discourses of our Lord is so frequently repeated, and made so deeply emphatic, that we cannot but look for some Old Testament original of it. (Lampe remarks: “Familiare est

nostro Evangelistæ ὑπάγειν de exitu Christi.") Jesus thus declares Himself to be the bridegroom of the Canticles, and the Jewish Church to be the bride.—The notion that the seeking and not finding denotes only an entire disappearance (Grotius : Si me quæritis non comparebo), appealing to such passages as Ps. xxxvii. 10, Isa. xli. 12, is entirely refuted by these really fundamental passages of Proverbs and the Song of Solomon ; and it is contradicted by the simple "Ye shall seek Me," in ch. xiii. 33, which plainly shows that the seeking has an independent meaning. It is objected against the interpretation which these original passages establish, that the Jews did not seek Christ. There are who solve the difficulty by thus interpreting: "Ye shall desire the Redeemer whom ye have rejected in My person." But Meyer rightly observes that this interpretation relaxes the tragic strength of the passage, which lies in this, that after they had persecuted and killed Him as present, they would then wish Him back as absent, but in vain. There needs, however, no such violence. In the words, "Ye shall seek Me," there is meant only that they would have sufficient occasion to seek Christ—that they would fall into the deepest distress. They would have reason enough to wish back Christ, whom they could now no longer endure, whose presence was now intolerable to them. Whether they afterwards actually wished Him back, or hardened their hearts against any such wish, is nothing to the point ; although there might be many, even in those days of distress and sorrow, who attained, if not to thorough repentance, yet to sorrow and remorse, and to a certain longing for Christ. In the conscience of the Jewish people there was a voice that cried, as in the conscience of Judas, its type, "I have sinned in the innocent blood."—"Where I am, thither ye cannot come." On earth they have tribulation and distress, and to that heavenly glory from which Jesus beholds their ruin they cannot attain : there they cannot find a compensation for that which the earth denies to them. What was refused to Peter for the moment, ch. xiii. 36, was refused to the Jews for ever. It is the privilege of the servants of Christ to be where He is : comp. ch. xii. 26, xiv. 3, xvii. 24. Luther : "Thus must Germany learn where to go and abide. All this will have its truth amongst us also, as we shall find."

Ver. 35. "Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither

will he go, that we shall not find him? Will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? 36. What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?"—By the "dispersed of the Gentiles," is generally understood, after an inapplicable comparison of 1 Pet. i. 1, Jas. i. 1, the Jewish *Diaspora*. Some then assume that the Hellenes here are Hellenist Jews; but this is contrary to the usage of the New Testament, where the ἔλληνες are always the Greeks, in permanent contradistinction to the Jews, while the Greek-speaking Jews are always described as ἑλληνισταί. Others think that the Jewish *Diaspora* is really meant as the sphere of labour among the Greeks; but this introduces an inharmonious complexity into the passage, and hinders the true effect of the words in which the Jews express the thought that Jesus would entirely renounce His own people and turn absolutely to the Gentiles. The "dispersed of the Greeks" is rather the dispersion which consists of the Greeks themselves. The expression points to the great variety of countries which they entered into; and to the fact that they were not to be understood as Greeks in the stricter sense, but as including the countless peoples speaking the Greek tongue. The fundamental passage is Gen. x. 5, where, after the enumeration of the sons of Javan, it is said: "And by these were the isles of the Gentiles divided; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations." We must further compare ver. 32: "These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations; and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood:". Sept., ἀπὸ τούτων διεσπάρησαν νῆσοι τῶν ἔθνῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς μετὰ τὸν κατακλυσμόν. The starting-point of these words was the prophecy of Christ, in which He exhibited in prospect the rejection of the Jews and the transference of the kingdom of God to the Gentiles; especially Matt. viii. 11, where Jesus took occasion from the faith of the centurion to say, "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness." Their own interpretation, however, does not satisfy the Jews. They suggest it only as a question of doubt, and in ver. 36 they seem

to regard the problem as one not yet solved. There must, consequently, have been in the words of Christ an element which was contradictory to their interpretation. This lies in the *ὑπάγω* that He added, “to Him who hath sent Me.” Earthly-minded themselves, they cannot follow Him:<sup>1</sup> they leave these words out in ver. 36 without further ado; but their omission shows that they felt the inadequacy of their interpretation. Nevertheless, there lies in their apprehension of the Lord’s saying an element of truth; and that is the reason why John has adduced these words. The Jews cannot but feel the presentiment that Isa. xl ix. 4–6 is about to be fulfilled.<sup>2</sup>

There follows now, in vers. 37–52, what took place on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Ver. 37. “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.”—The last day of the feast could not have been the seventh, which was in no way distinguished, and on which the number of the victims sacrificed was less than on any other day. It could have been only the eighth, which, like the first, was pre-eminent above the others,—1. on account of the holy convocation, Lev. xxiii. 36; and 2. through the cessation of all work, which gave it the name Azereth, Num. xxix. 35: on the six preceding days work was not absolutely forbidden, and they were only half feast-days. (In ch. xix. 31, that Sabbath is called a *great* one, which was distinguished above others by falling within the feast. In the Old Testament, comp. Isa. lvi. 12, where they say, “And to-morrow shall be as this day, much more abundant;” where by the *great* day a noble one is meant, such an one as witnessed great things.) It has been objected that the feast proper consisted of only seven days (comp. Num. xxix. 35), and that the eighth day was a specific festival; that all the sacrifices peculiar to this feast were appointed only for seven days; and especially that the bullocks, though specific festal sacrifices, were so distributed that the last seven fell on the seventh day, while the eighth day had only the

<sup>1</sup> Calvin: Nominatim locutus erat Christus de Patre: ipsi autem in terra subsidunt nec aliud cogitant, quam migrationes in terras longinquas.

<sup>2</sup> The remark of Calvin once more deserves notice: Sed quo ipsi Jesum iturum putabant, ut ipsorum insidias vitaret, eo Jesu jam locum tutum ac gloriosum obtinente, ipsi coacti sunt fugam capere.

offerings common to every feast-day, including even the new moon. But the reason that the eighth stood in a certain kind of independence was, as Philo tells us, that it not only fixed the conclusion of the Feast of Tabernacles, but marked also the conclusion of the whole festal year. Therefore the *Azereth*, or convocation, did not fall upon the seventh day, as in the case of the Passover; it was appointed for the following eighth day, which was also the reason why the sacrifices of the feast came to an end on the seventh day. The dignity of the day was not lessened by this, but heightened. But it is plain, notwithstanding this concomitant design, that the day belonged to the Feast of Tabernacles. In Lev. xxiii. the duration of the feast is, on the one hand, limited to seven days, as in ver. 34; but, on the other, we read there of the eighth day of the feast, ver. 36. So in Num. xxix., on the one hand, we have in ver. 12, "And ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days;" but, on the other, in ver. 35, "And on the eighth day ye shall have a solemn assembly: ye shall do no servile work therein." The first Feast of Dedication was, according to 2 Macc. x. 6, kept for eight days, in compensation for the Feast of Tabernacles, the festivity of which had been hindered by the enemy. Josephus says of the Feast of Tabernacles, Archæol. iii. 10, 4: ἐφ' ἡμέρας ὀκτὼ ἔορτὴν ἄγοντας.—It has been further objected, that the ceremony of pouring out water was peculiar to the seven days of the feast, the ceremony which gave Jesus occasion to represent Himself as the giver of the true water. But it is very doubtful whether this rite did not belong to the eighth day also. R. Jehuda, in the Gemara, maintains expressly, and without contradiction, that it did (Cod. Succa, p. 404). If it did actually cease with the eighth day, then it might be said that the symbol lasted seven days, and on the eighth was its interpretation. Moreover, it must not be overlooked that there is no express allusion to this rite; although the supposition that Jesus saw it before His eyes at the time, is very probable and very attractive. There is no force in the objection, that in the ceremony it was a libation, whereas Jesus spoke of drinking; for water has always its reference to drinking, and in the passage on which the rite was founded it is introduced only as an antidote to thirst. They drew water every day of the Feast of Tabernacles from the fountain of Siloam,—which had been conse-

crated by Isaiah, ch. viii. 6, into a figure of the kingdom of God,—and poured it upon the altar. This ceremony had nothing whatever to do with the passage, 1 Sam. vii. 6, with which De Wette and others have sought to connect it. There the water poured out was a symbolical “Lord, have mercy :” comp. the “I am poured out like water,” in Ps. xxii. 15; and 2 Sam. xiv. 14: “For we die, and are as water spilt upon the ground.” Simultaneous with the pouring out of water was the fasting and confession : “We have sinned against the Lord,”—the acknowledgment of evil as something deserved. But, on the contrary, the pouring out of water at the Feast of Tabernacles rested, according to the saying of the Talmud (Dachs, pp. 371–2), on the passage of Isaiah, “With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.” It was a remembrancer of this promise, and a prayer for its fulfilment. During the journey through the wilderness, deliverance had been announced in the form of the effusion of water. Hence Isaiah took occasion to exhibit the bestowment of future salvation under the same similitude. To give this passage of Isaiah a symbolical expression at the Feast of Tabernacles was obvious enough, especially as the passage referred to the guidance of the people through the wilderness, even as the feast itself was based upon that event. We have seen already, that this feast not only served as a remembrancer of benefits past, but that it was especially a pledge that God would graciously lead His people through the wilderness of this world, and safely guide them out of it at last. The feast was not only one of thanksgiving, it was also one of hope ; and of this latter aspect of it, Isa. xii. 3 was the appropriate text. Jesus declares Himself to be the water of salvation, announced by the prophet Isaiah ; and Isaiah himself gave the warrant for doing so. The connection of the springs of salvation with the person of the Messiah is plain, from the relation of ch. xii. to ch. xi., where all the salvation of the future is bound up with the person of the Messiah. And what Isaiah said in ch. xii. concerning the waters of salvation, receives its consummation also in ch. iv. 1, to which the words *ἐάν τις δύψῃ*—*πινέτω* definitely allude : comp. on ch. vi. 45, iv. 14. Our words have a warning as well as an attractive side. Luther : “That He might terrify them against carelessness, and make them take heed not to forsake Him. For when He goes away

He leaves none behind Him but sin, sorrow, the devil, death, sweat, toil, and woe. He takes all that is good away with Him."

Ver. 38. "He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."—That was first confirmed on the day of Pentecost. The transcendent fulness of the spirit and life in the young Church streamed forth outwardly with a mighty influence, of which we find no trace in the old covenant. Luther: "He that cometh to Me shall be so furnished with the Holy Ghost, that he shall not be merely quickened and refreshed himself, and delivered from his thirst, but shall be also a strong stone vessel, from which the Holy Ghost in all His gifts shall flow to others, refreshing and comforting and strengthening them, even as he was refreshed by Me.—So St Peter, on the day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 41, who, by one sermon, as by a rush of water, delivered three thousand men from the devil's kingdom, washing them in an hour from sin, death, and Satan." That was only the first exhibition of a glorious peculiarity which distinguishes the Church of the New Testament from the Church of the Old. She has a living impulse which will diffuse the life within her, even to the ends of the earth. (Lyser: *Copiosa derivatio ad exteriores est indicium abundantiae interioris.*) Although the quotation from the Old Testament need not be strictly literal, yet its most characteristic elements must be found there, else the reference to what the Scripture had said would have no special force. Then we have, 1. The flowing forth of the water. In the passages commonly adduced, such as Isa. lviii. 11, we do not find this characteristic. They refer only to the personal possession of the water, the personal enjoyment of salvation. 2. The very peculiar mention of the body, or belly, *κοιλία*, must necessarily have been derived from the Old Testament. But both are found united if we go back to the Song of Solomon, to which Christ referred in ch. vii. 33, 34, even as the New Testament generally is pervaded with references to it, all resting upon the assumption of its spiritual meaning: comp. my Commentary. In Cant. iv. 12, the bride, the Church of God in the house of Messiah, is called, on account of her overflowing indwelling fulness of salvation, "a *spring* shut up, a *fountain* sealed" (Lyser, on the passage of John: *Anima creditum hic*

consideratur ut in *fontem aquæ vivæ conversa*); in ver. 15, “a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.” The idea of reference to these passages is all the more obvious because there had been allusion to them already in ch. iv. 14. The *body* or *belly* is in Cant. vii. 2; and, just as here, with reference to the saving and quickening and invigorating power which proceeds from the Church: “Thy navel is a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor; thy belly is like an heap of wheat set about with lilies: ὁμφαλός σου κρατήρ τορευτὸς, μὴ ὑστερούμενος κράμα· κοιλὰ σου θημωνία σίτου πεφραγμένη ἐν κρίνοις.” In the navel—which, as part of the belly, represents the whole, as in the second member of the sentence—it is only the goblet-form that comes into view. Under the figure of a goblet always full of liquor, is exhibited the adaptation of the Church of the future, the people of God in the Messiah’s time, to refresh the thirsty with the high waters of life. What the goblet full of liquor was to the thirsty, in the second clause the wheat is to the hungry.

Ver. 39. “But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet; because Jesus was not yet glorified.”—The *water* in the symbolism of Scripture can only be a figure of blessing and salvation; comp. my Commentary on Num. xxiv. 7; Cant. iv. 12. This is the sense in which it is everywhere used in John’s phraseology: comp. on ch. iv. 10. In Isa. xii. 3, the passage which forms the foundation for all similar ones, the well of *salvation* is spoken of. But the transition from the common signification of the water to that interpretation which the Evangelist here gives, is mediated by Isa. xliv. 3, where the water is first explained as blessing, and the outpouring of the Spirit is then associated with it as the greatest of all blessings. For the rest, the Evangelist does not say generally, and without qualification, that the water *signified* the Holy Spirit; but he only refers to the fact, that what Jesus had said concerning the water, found its fulfilment in the outpouring of the Holy Ghost.—The Apostle did not design to say that the Holy Spirit—who is regarded here in His immanent influence upon the people of God and indwelling in their hearts—had absolutely never been present before the glorification of Jesus. Such a declaration would have contradicted the whole tenor of the Old Testament. David

prays in Ps. li., "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me" (1 Sam. xvi. 13 records how the Holy Spirit came down upon David). The children of Israel vexed and rebelled against God's Holy Spirit, Isa. lxiii. 10, whose presence in their midst was their high prerogative, their pre-eminence above the heathen world, ver. 11. Paul also, Acts xxviii. 25, bears witness to the presence and dignity of the Holy Spirit under the old covenant. We cannot escape the difficulty by saying, "In the definite sense, as the Christian Spirit, He was not given." The Holy Spirit generally is here spoken of, and not any definite aspect of the Spirit. The legitimate solution of the difficulty is this : "The difference, relative in itself, is uttered in an absolute form : because the advancement in the Spirit's influence is so important that the earlier does not enter into consideration, and the word holds good, 'The former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind,'" Isa. lxxv. 17. All that was said upon ch. i. 17 is true here likewise. That the Holy Ghost comes so much more abundantly into mention in the New Testament, points us to the fact that a great change in this respect had taken place. The Old Testament speaks, in relation to the Spirit, always of a distant time. The more abundant effusion of the Holy Ghost belongs to the characteristic signs of the "end of the days." The classical passage in relation to this whole subject, is Joel ii. 28 ; and to this refer Isa. xxxii. 15, "Until the Spirit be poured from on high," xi. 9, liv. 13; Jer. xxxi. 33, 34; Ezek. xxxvi. 26 seq.; Zech. xii. 10; Dan. ix. 24 (Christol. vol. iii.). The starting-point of the whole is the bestowment of the Spirit without measure on Christ, Isa. xi. 2, the fulness of which overflows upon His Church : He received not the Spirit for Himself merely, but as the Head of the Church, that He might be the new life of the human race.—The Apostle speaks first of the Spirit, then of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is, in His nature, the Holy One. The idea of holiness is that of separation from the world, of absolute elevation above it. It belongs to the nature of the Spirit to be altogether supernatural.<sup>1</sup>—With the glorification of Christ the outpouring of the Holy Ghost stands historically connected : comp. ch. xx.

<sup>1</sup> The omission of the *αὐτὸν* in some codices, is, like the addition of *δεδομένον* in others, probably a gloss attributable to an anxiety for the dogma of the divinity and personality of the Holy Ghost. They struck out

22; Acts ii. 33.<sup>1</sup> But how are we to understand that connection? The foundation of the change to which we have referred is the expiation and abolition of sin accomplished by Christ, Rom. viii. 3, and which is appropriated by faith. By this the wall of separation between God and man is removed, so that the Spirit, the bond of the Creator and the creature, may freely be imparted. In the fact of redemption accomplished, we find the root of the potency and influence of the Spirit. Immediately after the propitiation was effected, Christ utters the "Receive the Holy Ghost." In ch. iii. 14, 15, the redemption of Christ, His death upon the cross, appears as the foundation of the new birth of the Spirit. According to ch. iii. 5, the water, the pledge and medium of the forgiveness of sins, must go before the Spirit. And in the Old Testament the forgiveness of sins appears as the necessary condition of the impartation of the Spirit. David, in Ps. li., prays first for the forgiveness of sins, vers. 5-11, and then for the renewed impartation of the gifts of the Spirit. In the classical passage, Jer. xxxi. 31 seq., the forgiveness of sins is the fundamental blessing of the times of Christ, the foundation of the richer bestowment of the Holy Ghost: "I will put My law in their inward parts, *for* I will forgive their iniquities." Before God can give, He must take away. The sins which separate between the people and God, Isa. lix. 2, must be removed; then, and not till then, can the internal grace of the Spirit be assured to the people, that it might become truly the people of God, that God's name might be sanctified in it. Thus Jesus, after His glorification, distributes the good things which He first obtained in His sufferings.

Ver. 40. "Many of the people, therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. 41. Others said, This is the Christ. But others said,<sup>2</sup> Shall Christ come

the ἄγιον, that every one might think only of the Spirit in the general sense, and added δεδομένον in order to limit the expression simply to the outpouring of the Spirit.

<sup>1</sup> Augustine: Post resurrectionem autem suam, primum quando apparuit discipulis suis dixit illis: accipite Spiritum sanctum.—Deinde comoratus cum eis quadraginta dies, ut liber actuum Apost. demonstrat, ipsis videntibus adscendit in cœlum. Ibi peractis decem diebus, die Pentecostes misit desuper Spiritum sanctum.

<sup>2</sup> We follow Lachmann's text: 'Εκ τοῦ ὄχλου οὖν ἀκούσαντες τῶν λόγων τούτων—ἄλλοι (δὲ) ἔλεγον—οἱ δὲ ἔλεγον.

out of Galilee? 42. Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? 43. So there was a division among the people because of Him." — Some declared Christ to be the Prophet: comp. on ch. i. 21. That does not mean that they assumed "decisively a distinction between the Prophet and the Messiah :" it only means that they left the question an open one. So much to them was certain, that the marks of the Prophet in Deut. xviii. would be present in Christ: whether also the other marks of the Messiah, as they are given, e.g. in Isa. ix. and xi., was still doubtful to them; and naturally so, as the kingly office of the Messiah lay in deep concealment during His condition of humiliation. Had it not been so, they would have distinguished between the Prophet and Christ. Others, who had a keener spiritual eye, and hence could discern the hidden glory beneath the form of a servant, beheld in Jesus at once the Christ. The former did not deny it: they only hesitated at once to avow it. The difference was only between a partial and a perfect apprehension of the truth. An absolute denial, therefore, encounters only the latter class. It does not deny the descent of Christ from David. The preceding, "Shall Christ come out of Galilee?" shows that they were thinking only of the local point of departure, and that the descent from David was only introduced as the basis for mentioning the place where David was: as and because of the seed of David, so also, etc., Christ must come out from Bethlehem, in order outwardly to exhibit the descent from David. (Comp. my Christol. vol. i.) Considering how plainly and decisively the Old Testament teaches the descent of Jesus from the stock of David, it would have been utterly impossible that He should have found acceptance if this point had been exposed to any doubt whatever. The certainty of the descent of Jesus from David was not only attested throughout the New Testament; it was also confirmed by the narrative of Hegesippus concerning the relatives of Jesus, whom Domitian summoned to Rome as the descendants of David: Euseb. Ecc. Hist. iii. 19, 20. Nor do they deny that Christ was born in Bethlehem. However that might be, it was not sufficient in their opinion to satisfy the prophecy of Micah in ch. v. 1: "And thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He

come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel." In this they lay the stress upon *go forth*, *κυριεύειν*. They maintain that Christ must, according to this prophecy, not only be born in Bethlehem, but go forth from that place to His work. But Jesus came immediately from Galilee. They overlook, in their polemical zeal (Calvin : En quomodo soleant homines ex Scripturis ipsis, quæ ad Christum manu nos ducunt, sibi obstacula struere ne ad Christum veniant), that Micah v. 1 was supplemented and limited by Isa. ix. 1, where Galilee is marked out as the district which was to be elevated by the manifestation of the Messiah from the deepest humiliation to the highest glory. Anton : "Thus they toss about like a football, although there was in the Scripture a passage so plain, declaring that out of Galilee a great light of the Gentiles should rise. They declared that He must come out of the town of Bethlehem ; that also was true. But they should have observed both, and learned to combine them delicately. But they separate them entirely. In His coming from Bethlehem, the special circumstance was, that Bethlehem was but a little place ; therefore they should not have spoken so scornfully about Galilee. For God does not act according to the measure of men's vanity, but would draw men away from that vanity. Therefore all the circumstances touching Christ are so ordered as to bring us down from our heights. They themselves say here, 'from the *village* of Bethlehem.' And the prophet said, 'Thou that art little ; but thou shalt not in fact be little, because the Greatest will spring forth from thee.' Thus they made their sad distinctions." On "there was a division," Quesnel observes : "Divisions there must be. It is abandoning and betraying the truth, to cease to defend it when it is contended against. Neither fear of offence needlessly taken, nor a false love to peace, should restrain the lovers of truth and stop their tongues."

Ver. 44. "And some of them would have taken Him ; but no man laid hands on Him ;" that is, because God's secret influence restrained their hands until the hour of Jesus had come.

Ver. 45. "Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees ; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him ? 46. The officers answered, Never man spake like this man."—The mission of these officers was mentioned in ver. 32. John had since then adduced only a few of the words of Christ,

a few leading statements out of longer discourses : comp. ver. 14, where it is said generally that Jesus taught. To the influence upon the officers here, corresponds that upon Judas' band in ch. xviii. 6. "This the officers themselves say," remarks Anton ; "by which we may gather that, if conscience had not urged them, they would not have said to their masters what they did. They very well knew that they would not curry favour thereby, but they said it nevertheless with true emphasis. Thus the things of God go on, however pressed down, step by step." As it was with Christ, so also it is with His servants. Embittered opposition is never alone. It is everywhere accompanied by the acknowledgment of the men of good will, of whom there are always some to be found ; and this recognition on their part serves, moreover, to bring into clear light the wicked will of the adversaries. "It is a strong word," says Luther, "which they here speak in their humility. Highly do they honour the preaching of Christ, and joyfully or freely do they confess to His name. They know indeed that their masters want to put Him to death ; but nevertheless they honour His word."—Ver. 47. "Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived ? 48. Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him ?" Anton : "Thus again they wanted to insinuate their stratagem. But scarcely have they thus spoken, when a ruler comes out of their midst, and interposes his words. Thus they are put to shame." Comp. also ch. xii. 42.—Ver. 49. "But this people, who knoweth not the law, are cursed." In Deut. xxvii. 26, we read the last and the most comprehensive of the twelve curses against the transgression of the law : "Cursed is he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." That curse refers to the practical obedience of the law ; but, in those times of moral perversion, when an infinite number of commandments was introduced, the knowledge and the obedience of the law so far coincided, that only the learned could be free from the curse of the law :<sup>1</sup> a result which ought to have been sufficient of itself to proclaim the impropriety of the principles from which it proceeded. The Pharisees regarded

<sup>1</sup> Grotius : Quasi vero hoc ad illos apices pertineret, qui nisi in scholis disci non poterant : ideoque simplex aliquis piscator aut opifex secundum communem intellectum dans operam servandis Dei præceptis Deo nescere non posset.

the dependence of the common people on Christ as a consequence of the curse which rested upon them. God had sent upon them, in righteous judgment, a mighty spirit of error, so that they believed a lie: just as Jehovah, in 1 Kings xxii. 23, sent a spirit of lying into the mouth of all the prophets of Ahab, in order to bring upon him the destruction which he deserved. Instead of ἐπικαταράτος, Lachmann reads ἐπάρατος. Here once more we see plainly how apt a mere external criticism is to err. Ἐπάρατοι is a change introduced by the copyists, who were accustomed to the usage of classic Greek authors. Ἐπικατάρατος never occurs in them; but in the Septuagint and the Apocrypha it not seldom stands for the Hebrew אָרָוּ, which is only thus rendered, and so in Gal. iii. 10, 13. Ἐπάρατος never occurs in the New Testament, Septuagint, or Apocrypha.

Vers. 50, 51. “ Nicodemus saith unto them (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them), Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doeth ?”—It is first said of Nicodemus that he came to Jesus by night. That this observation was not intended merely to designate his person, but that it rather contrasted his former fear of man with his present confession and defence of Jesus, is shown, as by the analogy of the second remark, “ which was one of them,” so also by ch. xix. 39, where with “ which at the first came to Jesus by night,” corresponds what in ver. 38 is said of Joseph of Arimathea, “ being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews.” The comparison with this passage is decisive also against those who are not disposed to find in these words a simple contrast with the earlier conduct of Nicodemus; but make them at the same time contain a reference to the fact that Nicodemus was not yet perfectly free in his declaration, but still embarrassed with some remains of his earlier timidity.<sup>1</sup> The opposition of Nicodemus is more express than at the first glance it might appear; and the source from which it flowed was plain enough to be discerned by his colleagues, as their answer shows. That he did not more openly adhere to Christ, might be attributed with equal propriety to a prudent caution as

<sup>1</sup> Calvin: Quod non defendit liberius Christum, in eo nimiam timiditatem prodit. Significat ergo Evang., cum adhuc sapere noctis latebras nec verum esse Christi discipulum. Grotius: Hoc additur ut intelligatur et Christi fautor et timidior. Ideo nec aperte ei patrocinatur.

to fear. He would bring an argument to bear upon his colleagues, which in their known principles they could not very well evade. Lachmann reads, ὁ ἐλθὼν πρὸς αὐτὸν πρότερον; Tischendorf merely, ὁ ἐλθὼν πρὸς αὐτόν. “External authorities,” says Lücke, “do not warrant either reading absolutely.” But internal reasons strongly recommend *μυκτός*. The other readings give a mere personal designation, and we have seen already that this was not to be expected alone. The mere “who came to Him” is too indefinite. The connection with the following—“who came to Jesus, although he was one of them”—disturbs the evident reference of the εἰς ὧν ἐξ αὐτῶν to ver. 48. But *πρότερον* is probably a gloss, derived from the τὸ πρώτον in ch. xix. 38, which is found in several critical authorities, but in others was changed after the *πρότερον*, ver. 51. Nicodemus had been described in ch. iii. 1 as a member of the council. The “which was one of them” could not thus be a mere personal designation; but it pointed to the fact that the word in ver. 48, “Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?” received, through the Divine appointment, an immediate and palpable contradiction in the person of Nicodemus.<sup>1</sup> The members of the council had spoken contemptuously of the “people who knew not the law.” Nicodemus shows them that they themselves were exhibiting a shameful contradiction to the law. The law ordained, “Thou shalt not regard a false report,” Ex. xxiii. 1. In Deut. i. 16, it specially prescribed to the judges, “Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother;” and ver. 17, “Ye shall hear the small as well as the great.” The law here at the same time lays hold of the organs of its own execution, and imposes rules upon them as a body.

Ver. 52. “They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.”—Much has been very wrongly said about the “almost incomprehensible errors of the Sanhedrim.” They only express themselves in a lively manner, as men do in com-

<sup>1</sup> Lampe: Duo hæc singula suam emphasin habent. Notatur 1. Quod noctu venerit ad Jesum, ut indicatur timidos per gratiam Dei fiducia impleri posse et nocturnum illud colloquium fructu suo non carnisse. 2. Quod unus esset ex illis. Sic actu ipso refutat eos, qui ex tam illustri ordine neminem in Jesum credere venditaverant.

mon life, and when out of the schools. Their meaning was, that no prophet of any high mark, and no great number of prophets, had arisen in Galilee. The only prophet whose Galilean origin was generally acknowledged was Jonah of Gath-hepher, 2 Kings xiv. 25. But if this had been objected to the council, they would have been but little embarrassed by it. They would have replied by some such proverb as our “one swallow does not make spring.” The Galilean origin of Nahum would not have been admitted as of any force. Why he, in his superscription, is called the Elkoshite, is a point controverted to the present day. The supposition that he was so called after some town in Galilee, rests simply and alone upon a statement of Jerome: *Helcesi usque hodie in Galilæa viculus*. Even should this supposition be right, there is nothing to prove that it was the current one in the days of our Lord. The witness nearest to that age, Jonathan, paraphrases the words in the prophet thus: “Nahum, of the family of Koschi.” Jerome says: *Quidam putant Helcesæum patrem esse et secundum Hebræam traditionem etiam ipsum prophetam fuisse.* Abenesra and Kimchi are not certain whether the denomination Elkoshite referred to his stock, or to his father, or to his country. Even if we assume the last, it is still doubtful whether Elkosh lay in Galilee. Finally, it is maintained by many that Elias sprang from Galilee. Had this been so, the supreme importance of that prophet—who in both Testaments always appears as the Coryphæus of the collective prophets; comp. Mal. iv. 5—might justify what has been said about the “almost incomprehensible error of the members of the Sanhedrim.” But the Galilean origin of Elijah cannot be demonstrated by the only passage that has been adduced to establish it, 1 Kings xvii. 1: comp. with Tobit i. 2. Elijah being there called “the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead,” the Septuagint regarded Tishbi as a place in Gilead. It translated: ὁ ἐκ Θεσβῶν τῆς Γαλαάδ. So also Epiphanius: ἐκ Θεσβῶν ἐκ τῆς γῆς Ἀράβων. Tisbi is indicated by the clause, “of the inhabitants of Gilead,” to have been situated in Gilead; not that the prophet had the position of a citizen there, but dwelt in that place as a man without a home: his forefathers had immigrated to it. This explanation is favoured by the alliteration between Tishbi and Toshbi, תְשׁׂבִי not being written *plene*, as it is everywhere else,

for the sake of it. The interpretation, “born at Tishbe, but dwelling in Gilead,” robs this alliteration of its significance; and it is opposed by what Keil refers to: “Had Elijah been born in Galilee, the mention of his birth-place would have been a sufficient indication for any Israelite; and the remark that he belonged to the inhabitants of Gilead would have been superfluous, since the object was not to furnish a chronological memoir of his life:” and with this Thenius agrees. It is not easy to understand why it was that, whereas the *birth-place* of most of the rest of the prophets is mentioned, the place of residence also is given in the case of Elijah, and a place, moreover, which is not alluded to distinctively anywhere in the narrative.

The objection of the Pharisees was not altogether an imaginary one. Judea is, throughout the Old Testament, in all respects the land pre-eminently; while Galilee of the Gentiles, Isa. viii. 23, has only a corner-place assigned to it. The temple in Jerusalem, the spiritual dwelling-place of the collective nation, is the centre of all prophetic operation. These facts established so much at least, that the labours of Jesus might not be restricted to Galilee; and this our Saviour admitted always in act. He had just before been teaching the people in the temple. But the Pharisees, in going beyond this, altogether failed to perceive that Galilee of the Gentiles was precisely the most congenial starting-point for Him who was come to seek the lost; and that, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, it was the dense darkness of this region which was so pre-eminently enlightened by the outgoings of the great Light. They acted like those who in all ages, and in this age, hide behind the fig-leaves of solemn arguments the rebellion which has its root in a perverted heart. With perfect right Bengel remarks: Ex stupenda eorum multitudine, qui pereunt, vix quenquam invenias, qui non uno alteroive hujus generis πρώτῳ φεύδει abreptus, veritatis salutaris efficaciam in se sufflaminet. The human heart is inexhaustible in the invention of such specious arguments, when the light from above shines into the darkness of his old nature. Instead of ἐγήρεται, Lachmann and Tischendorf read ἐγείρεται. This reading was an intentional correction, designed to set aside the historical difficulty, the “almost incomprehensible error of the Sanhedrim.”

## THE SECTION OF THE ADULTERESS.

## CH. VII. 53—VIII. 11.

There can be no reasonable doubt that this section was not a component part of the original Gospel, but that it was introduced into it by another hand. It is wanting in so many and so important Codd. and MSS., that this of itself might be considered proof enough of its being spurious. We cannot, indeed, altogether and unconditionally agree with Bleek, when he says: “It is not to be thought of, that anxiety lest the Redeemer’s gentleness towards the adulteress might be abused by the unintelligent and thoughtless, was a sufficient reason why an entire genuine section of this Gospel should have been for many centuries, and in all parts of the Church, passed over in perfect silence, or actually struck out of the text of biblical manuscripts.” The supposed offence,—to which Augustine, although, indeed, with an “I suppose,” referred,<sup>1</sup>—is so great, that the impossibility of thus explaining the omission cannot be maintained with absolute confidence: especially as we know that dogmatical objections have availed to the omission of other passages from the manuscripts: comp. on ch. v. 3 seq. Meanwhile, what is given with the one hand is retracted with the other. Only well-grounded objection and offence could have had so pervasive an influence; and a narrative which furnishes such a stumblingblock could not possibly have proceeded from the Evangelist himself; and our exposition will make it plain that there is in the account a stumblingblock which no explanation will explain away.

Internal reasons tend in the same direction as the external. We find none of the peculiarities of John’s style in the narrative; on the other hand, every verse of it presents, as our exposition will show, something decidedly alien to his style. It is very suspicious, for instance, that the δέ occurs in this short section no less than eleven times, heaped together in a manner of which there is no example elsewhere in his writings; while,

<sup>1</sup> De Adulterinis Conjug. ii. 7 : Hoc videlicet infidelium sensus exhorret, ita ut nonnulli modice vel potius inimici veræ fidei, credo, metuentes, peccandi impunitatem dari mulieribus suis, illud quod de adulteræ indulgentia Dominus fecit, auferrent de codicibus suis.

on the contrary, his favourite *ovv* is found only once. Moreover, all is at the very first glance intelligible and straightforward; we have none of that mystical dark-in-bright which everywhere characterizes John's style, and none of that necessity to master the meaning of the writer by thoughtful reflection and pondering that we are accustomed to in his genuine productions. Nor is it without significance that the narrative interrupts the connection. Both before it and after it we have matter which directly refers to the question whether Jesus were the Christ, the Son of God. Then, again, John's authorship is contradicted by the fact, that while the beginning of the account is borrowed from Luke, the motive of it was furnished by Paul. We have the starting-point in Rom. ii. 1, where the Apostle says to the Jews: "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things;" comp. vers. 22, 23, ch. iii. 23: "For there is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." These statements of the Apostle have here put on an historical vestment. Lampe cannot help observing that our narrative presents much similarity to the parable of the prodigal son. Expositors of the middle ages declare plainly that the woman here represented heathenism, to which the grace of God, slighted by the Jews, was assigned by Christ.<sup>1</sup> The last and strongest argument is the offence we have already touched upon. If we look at the element of mercy in it, the narrative makes good what Lyser says: *Tota historia est mirifice consolatoria afflictis conscientiis, si quidem vident, ne infamem quidem adulteram a Christo rejici, modo agat poenitentiam.* The Saviour's

<sup>1</sup> According to Rupert, the woman was a type of the Church which was to be gathered from the Gentiles, quæ deserto vero suo Deo fornicata fuit cum Diis suis falsis et ab ipsa Judæorum synagoga accusata, atque ad dignam ultionem saepius petitor, a Christo est absoluta, qui Synagogam etiam sub peccato conclusam esse redarguens, ostendit ab illa merito hanc non accusandam aut execrandam. Hugo de St Victor, in the Annott. in Joan. I. i. c. 8, says: *Mulier ista significat Gentilem ecclesiam a diabolo per culturam idolorum violatam.* Hanc Judæi volunt lapidari, quia volunt eam damnari, dum invident eam gratiæ cœlestis participem fieri.—Grotius: *Recte autem notarunt veteres, in hac femina typum esse Ecclesiæ ex gentibus idololatriæ colligendæ, cui impertitam Dei misericordiam accusare Judæi non possent, si ipsi suos mores inspicherent.*

love to poor sinners meets us in a most attractive form ; and the delight in judging others is most effectually condemned.

But then, on the other hand, if we regard the account as history (and it must be so regarded if we receive it as from John), it does offer a very real and palpable stumbling-block ; indeed, it is no less than offensive. Thinking only of his point, the author never reflected that what he gives in the form of history, must in that form awaken mistrust. "The narrative," Hase strikingly remarks, "bears the ordinary stamp of the better apocryphal writers, who give one side of our Lord's character aright,—indeed, display it gloriously,—but are wanting in that all-sided truth, which most effectually distinguishes between the actual occurrences of fact and the imagined incidents of fiction."

There can be no doubt that our narrative was originally written with the express purpose of being interpolated into the Gospel of John. We find the simple evidence of this in the verses, chap. vii. 53-viii. 12, which obviously serve no other purpose than to connect this supposed fact with what precedes, and to insert it fairly in the Gospel. How diligently and skilfully the writer accomplished this task, is proved by the fact, that several manuscripts which treat the section itself as spurious or suspicious, nevertheless acknowledge these verses as the Evangelist's ; that Beza, who clearly perceived the spuriousness of the section, decided that these verses should be retained ; and that Wieseler, with others, defends them still. It is going altogether on a wrong track to seek traces of the recognition of this passage elsewhere ; for instance, in what Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. iii. 39, records of Papias : "He tells us also another history of a woman who was traduced before our Lord, as having committed many sins, which was contained in the Gospel *secundum Hebræos.*" That narrative has nothing in common with ours. The Gentile-Christian tendency of the latter would be quite out of harmony with the Gospel of the Hebrews. The "many sins" there, and the one offence here, are clearly distinct and discordant. The *διαβλήθεισα* leads us to think of a penitent sinner, like her of Luke vii. 36 seq., against whom her past forsaken and forgiven sins were wrongfully alleged. It could refer to no other charge than an unwarranted one.

It is the mistake of an unscientific and partial criticism, to

say that our narrative was “a morsel of oral tradition, which had an actual fact in our Saviour’s life for a foundation.” There is but one plain alternative: either John’s authorship, or a symbolical fiction which sought to gain authority by obtaining insertion in the Gospel of John. We have felt obliged to declare decidedly for the latter. If we take the design of the fiction into consideration, we must assign the date of it to a period in which the conflict with Jews and Jewish Christians was in full vigour. Only the most vivid polemical interest could have tempted any one to the bold expedient of usurping the apostolical authority, and putting interpolations into one of the holy Gospels. This requires us to keep within the limits of the second century, in which the conflict that gendered the *pia fraus* was most excited: comp. Graul’s “Christian Church on the Border of the Age of Irenæus.” The fact that the interpolation found so much acceptance, points to a similarly early era. The Apostolical Constitutions towards the end of the third century, are familiar with our narrative in its integrity (i. 2, 24); and this is all the more significant, from the fact already demonstrated, that it was originally written in order that it might be incorporated with the Gospel in the very place which it now occupies, and that it never had an independent existence. Wherever it has been given in any other connection, it has been certainly detached from its original place.

Chap. vii. 53. “And every man went unto his own house.”—Here we have a bootless circumstantiality; and all the more out of place, inasmuch as John in this part of his Gospel is very sparing of words, and everywhere aims to record only those particulars which were adapted to place in a clear light the great conflict between Jesus and the Jews. Moreover, it is very uncertain to what the “every man” refers, whether to the members of the council, who had been spoken of in what immediately precedes, or to the people generally. Probably the author thought of both at the same time, when he set the whole scene before his eyes. We cannot exclude the people, since the narrative of the combination of all parties again, in ver. 2, seems to correspond to their separation in this verse.—Chap. viii. 1. “Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives. 2. And early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the

people came unto Him ; and He sat down, and taught them.” *Tò ὅρος τῶν Ἐλαιῶν* is found in Matthew, who wrote for the Jewish Christians ; and in Mark, who depends upon him : *τὸ ὅρος τὸ καλούμενον Ἐλαιῶν*, in Luke, when he first mentions it, ch. xix. 29 ; again, after a considerable interval, in ch. xxi. 37 ; and in Acts i. 12, with a closer specification of its position. In John the mountain is nowhere else alluded to ; and, according to all analogies, he would not have spoken so simply and unconditionally of “the Mount of Olives.” *Ὀρθρος*, *ὅρθριος*, *ὅρθριζειν*, is found only in Luke ; John uses instead, *πρωΐ*, *πρωῖας*, *πρωῖνός*, Rev. ii. 28, xxii. 16. The words *Ἰησοῦς—πρὸς αὐτὸν* were doubtless put together on the basis of Luke xxi. 37, 38 : *ἡν δὲ τὰς ἡμέρας ἐν τῷ ἵερῳ διδάσκων τὰς δὲ νύκτας ἔξερχόμενος ηὐλίζετο εἰς τὸ ὅρος τὸ καλούμενον Ἐλαιῶν*. *Καὶ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ὡρθριζε πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ ἵερῳ ἀκούειν αὐτοῦ*.—To the *καὶ καθίσας ἔδιδασκεν αὐτούς* there are parallels only in the first three Gospels : comp. Matt. xxvi. 55 ; Mark xii. 41 ; Luke v. 3. The passage in Luke agrees best ; and it is all the more obvious to assume that the interpolator had this before his eyes, because the rest is taken from Luke.

Vers. 3, 4. “And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto Him a woman taken in adultery ; and when they had set her in the midst, they say unto Him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.”—The “scribes” are never elsewhere mentioned by John, which manifestly could not have been accidental. Nor does he ever refer to the *νομικολ*. He always contents himself with the general designation of Pharisees. To his first readers Judaism was already seen in the distance ; hence it was natural that he should enter as little as possible into the details of matters which were alien to them. The combination *οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι* was probably introduced here from Luke vi. 7 or xi. 53, where they occur in the same connection.—In what distinctive character do the scribes and Pharisees come ? Not merely as complainants, ver. 10, and as witnesses, whose business it was to make a commencement with the stoning, Acts vii. 59 (comp. our ver. 7), but also in part as judges, who, before they pronounce their decision, would have the opinion of Jesus. This is plain from the fact, that at the head of them came the scribes, who were called jurists ; from the mention of the *elders* in ver. 9 ;

and from the question of Jesus, “Hath no man condemned thee?” in ver. 10.—According to the Mosaic law, the adulterer and the adulteress were to die the death, Lev. xx. 10. That the adulterer in the present case had escaped, is a very shallow supposition. The narrative takes no account of what had become of him; it has to do only with the adulteress, because she gave the author the type of heathenism, which forsook the Creator and served the creature, Rom. i. 25, and committed adultery with stone and wood, Jer. iii. 9.—The forensic term ἐπαυτοφώρῳ (Grotius: vox est Græca forensis) does not seem to harmonize with the higher style of John.

Ver. 5. “But Moses commanded in the law that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?”—Concerning the punishment of adultery, Moses speaks in Lev. xx. 10 and Deut. xxii. 22. It is not without significance that in both passages not stoning, but death generally, is decreed; the latter passage, too, being in a context which introduces, before and after, stoning as the punishment of other offences: comp. vers. 21, 24. It appears that Moses, in regard to adultery, left the more exact specification of the mode of punishment to historical development, and the practice of the Jews was not in favour of stoning. In the Talmud, *Sanhedrim*, ch. vii. 4, we do not find adultery among the offences enumerated as punishable with stoning; and, according to x. 4, the adulterers were to be impaled. It has, indeed, been supposed that stoning was the common capital punishment in the law; and that as in certain cases it is expressly mentioned, Deut. xxii.; and that the woman would not be lightlier dealt with than the betrothed virgin, ver. 24. But this is unsound reasoning. Against the last instance Grotius remarks: *Adulterium in sponsa gravius censebatur, cum in custodia mariti non esset.* At any rate, it is certain that stoning was not expressly commanded in the law, as might be gathered from the language of those who here cite Moses. And thus there does appear on the face of the narrative such a contradiction to Moses as could not have proceeded from the scribes and Pharisees.

Ver. 6. “This they said, tempting Him, that they might have to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground.”—Wherein consisted the temptation? In the estimation of the author, the scribes and the

Pharisees doubtless thought that they would entangle Jesus in a contradiction to Moses, as in Matt. xix. 3 seq. It was supposed that Jesus, "the friend of publicans and sinners," would pronounce a milder judgment on the adulteress than Moses had pronounced; that He would make Himself worthy of stoning, by absolving one whom Moses condemned to be stoned.<sup>1</sup> That this was their aim is shown by the result, which did not correspond to the expectations of the scribes, only so far as and because their conscience was appealed to. Were the matter in question here the execution of criminal justice, it is not probable that the Pharisees would have laid such a snare for Christ. They could hardly think that He would place Himself in such direct and manifest antagonism to Moses, that He would oppose him in his own domain, and thus assault, so to speak, the God who had sent him. The Lord had never given any occasion for such an opinion of Himself as that. But this interpenetration of the spheres of law and gospel pervades the whole narrative, which, on that very account, loses all pretension to historical truth.—Why does Christ write upon the earth? We might, with many of the old expositors, compare Jer. xvii. 13, "Those who depart from Me shall be written upon the earth:" the earth, the place of perishableness; whosoever is only written or inscribed there, has no citizenship in heaven, does not stand in God's book of life, and must pass away without a trace. Jesus, on that supposition, must have written the names of the complainants. But the fact that what He wrote is not recorded, but only *that* He wrote, shows that the matter of His writing was not of moment, and therefore that the explanation must not be thus fetched out of the depths of the Old Testament, which, moreover, would be out of harmony with the entire character of the narrative, but must be derived from the custom of the Greeks (the classical passage is Aristoph. Acharn. 31 Schol.), amongst whom he wrote upon the earth who trifled idly, or had nothing more earnest or important to do. Christ gave it thereby to be understood that He had no respect for the questioners with their demonstrative sacred zeal; that He

<sup>1</sup> Lampe: Cum alia quoque occasione simile quid contigisset in scandalum Pharisaeorum, Luke vii. 31, unde et publicanos atque meretrices his legis custodibus præfest, Matt. xi. 31, et propter conversationem cum peccatoribus apud Pharisæos et scribas male accedit, Luke xv. 11.

did not think it worth His while even to answer them.<sup>1</sup> This trait, however, which has been dwelt upon much as evidencing the historical character of the narrative, rather betrays, and that in a very plain manner, its want of historical truth. It seems hardly worthy of Christ's dignity, to exhibit such a pastime of idle weariness. The contempt, the bitter scorn, the anger against the questioners, which this gesture would have expressed, suits better one of the old heathen philosophers in relation to his opponents than the Saviour of the world.—Most incorrectly has it been observed, “Jesus would not give any reply to the crafty question, because civil legislation and the administration of justice were no part of His function while upon earth.” But Jesus does enter into the matter thoroughly in what follows; and that entire distinction belongs only to the expositors who have invented it, and has no support whatever in the narrative itself.

Ver. 7. “So, when they continued asking Him, He lifted up Himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. 8. And again He stooped down, and wrote on the ground.”—If the question was a judicial one—as the casting the first stone implies—then the supposed answer of our Lord was at least incautious. Consequences might obviously follow, and inferences be drawn, tending to the subversion of all justice. Judgment is the Lord’s; whoever exercises its functions, as judge or witness, stands in the position of God’s minister: there must be no intrusion of personal and subjective bias, but all must be according to the law and ordinance of God. Luther: “Whether the prince, or burgomaster, or judge, be a knave or a fool or not, I should remember nevertheless that God’s word has been put into his hand. If I hold such an office, and am myself a wicked fool, I should say, although I deserve to have my head taken off, yet I must judge all the same, and do right upon

<sup>1</sup> So the author of the gloss found in many MSS., after τὴν γῆν· μὴ προσποιούμενος. So Euthymius, the only Greek expositor who has expounded our history. Calvin: Voluit Christus rem nihil agendo ostendere, quam ipsi audientia indigni essent. Quemadmodum si quis alio loquente, digito suo lineas in pariete ducat, vel tergum obvertat, vel alio signo demonstret ad id quod dicitur se minime attendere. And Lyser also: Indignos ipsos judicare quibus respondeat, cum omnia malitiose et fraudulenter agant: et in puniendo celeres esse velint, cum in recte agendo sint tardi.

others.” The limitation, unwarranted in itself, of the ἀναμάρτητος to one class of sins, does not remove the difficulty of the case. (The word does not occur anywhere else in the New Testament: the Sept. has it in Deut. xxix. 19: ἵνα μὴ συναπολέσῃ ὁ ἀμαρτωλὸς τὸν ἀναμάρτητον; of innocent children in 2 Macc. viii. 4.) A judge or witness who himself is living in adultery, is not the less on that account warranted and bound to punish adultery, or bear witness against it. But the error was the clothing this matter in judicial forms. The thought which hovered before the writer’s mind was good and genuinely Christian. Man, conscious of his own sinfulness, should abstain from all uncharitable judgment: comp. Matt. vii. 1. And with special reference to the relations which the fiction had assumed or symbolized: the Jews should, in the knowledge of their own sinfulness, cease to condemn the Gentiles, and abstain from denying to them all capacity of salvation: comp. Rom. ii. 1, 22, 23, iii. 23.

Ver. 9. “And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.”—The Pharisees here betray a tenderness of conscience which is not in harmony with their general character, even as it appears in ver. 6; and which differs much from the temper of mind which the Jews before and afterwards manifest in this group. The narrative becomes still less probable, when we observe that amongst those present were both the judges and the witnesses. It would not have entered their minds to omit their official duty, in the feeling of their own sinfulness. The Pharisaic self-righteousness, in combination with this consciousness of their responsibility and rights, would have so influenced them, that they would have repelled the imputation of Jesus with indignation. *Ἐις καθεῖς*, properly one by one—the preposition *κατά* becomes an adverb—is found elsewhere only in Mark xiv. 19: comp. ὁ δὲ καθεῖς, Rom. xii. 5. The “beginning at the eldest” seems suspicious. The elders themselves belonged to the whole to which the ἀρξάμενοι refers. The clumsy construction seems to point to some passage, applied without thorough consideration, in which the ἀρξάμενοι as active are distinguished from the πρεσβύτεροι as the passive: comp. Matt. xx. 8. Such a passage we find in Ezek. ix. 6: *καὶ ἤρξαντο*

ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνδρῶν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων οἱ ἡσαν ἔσω ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ. There the elders are the representatives of the people, the civil and religious rulers. And, accordingly, we must understand by the elders in our passage also official persons clothed with authority. Moreover, in the Gospels, *πρεσβύτεροι* is always a designation of dignity. And this way points also the “hath no man condemned thee?” in ver. 10. To condemn was the business of the rulers and judges. One cannot well see why precisely the eldest, who have been introduced in order to deprive the whole transaction of its awkward judicial character, viewed as a true history, should have necessarily been the first to go out. The reasons which have been adduced on that side are far-fetched. The old were, among the Pharisees, certainly more hardened than the younger. With the judges, on the contrary, the reason lies on the surface. They were the men who had primarily to act, and the main guilt rested on them.—None remained behind but Jesus and the woman. Jesus sat teaching in the midst of the people, when the scribes and Pharisees brought the woman in, ver. 2. What became of the people, was a question which did not trouble the author.

Ver. 10. “When Jesus had lifted up Himself, and saw none but the woman, He said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? 11. She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.”—The “condemnation” refers to the stoning. As the “eldest” had retired from her, the decision of the question was, as it were, devolved upon Jesus. He assumes the function of supreme judge; and with His “Neither do I condemn thee,” the matter was decided. The woman was dismissed with a formal acquittal. Now, if this narrative recorded an historical fact, it would have been very properly urged against the infliction of civil penalties on adultery. It would have given the authorities a direction *ad illud scelus plane connivere, quo nullum gravius in generis humani societatem committitur*—to connive at the vilest outrage that can be committed upon society. It would have established a glaring contradiction between the revelation given by Moses and that given by Christ. It is a mere subterfuge to maintain that Christ did not act here as a judge, that He did not trespass upon the domain of municipal justice, and that His decree was spoken only with reference

to a question of pure morality. Even were we to allow this unfounded distinction, there would still remain a very questionable point on which a strong objection might be based. The Word of God breathes everywhere the deepest abhorrence of adultery. Christ also, in relation to this sin, is more severe even than the Pharisees: comp. Matt. v. 27. In 1 Cor. vi. 9, adulterers are unconditionally excluded from the kingdom of God. In Heb. xiii. 4 we read, *πόρνους δὲ καὶ μοιχοὺς κρινεῖ ὁ Θεός*; and in Rev. xxii. 15, all whoremongers are “without.” Christ condemns the adulterers not less severely than Moses does; but He points out to them the way of repentance, and gives them the power to enter and walk in it. Nothing is said here about punishment and repentance; it is hinted only in an indirect manner by the *μηκέτι ἀμάρτανε*, which plainly is borrowed from ch. v. 14, that adultery is sin. But the woman to whom ch. v. 14 was spoken, had already borne the punishment of her sin. It may indeed be said that “Christ reckons upon the deep impression produced by all that had occurred, and dismisses her with only an additional warning.” But that impression was a secret one, and Christ speaks not for the person alone, but for the Church of all time; and if our Lord had even in appearance dealt so lightly with the matter, He would have given some handle to that moral laxity which has ever been only too ready to show its special preference for this narrative. Consequently, this narration cannot be regarded as historically true. The originator of the fiction had doubtless no evil design. He imagined to himself the sinner as a penitent; but, thinking little about the morality of his fable, he has contented himself with indistinctly and darkly reprobating Jewish prejudice and bigotry. Better we could hardly expect from one who has been bold enough to insert his own production into the sublime work of the Apostle.

Chap. vii. 37–52 belongs to the last day of the Dedication. The transactions between Jesus and the people on that occasion come to their close in ver. 44. Then follow certain transactions relating to Jesus, within the council, and occurring on the same day. Consequently, what we have in ch. viii. 12 seq. must be placed beyond the time of the feast; and with this harmonizes the fact, that beyond ch. viii. 12 there is no simple

allusion which may be certainly, or even with probability, referred to the feast. A new note of time we obtain once more in ch. x. 22. There we have the record of a transaction which passed at the Feast of the Dedication between Jesus and the Jews. The Lord evidently remained in Jerusalem during the interval between the feasts. Without more precise chronological specification, of no importance to the matter itself, John selects a few scenes of this interval, which were significant as explaining the relation of Jesus to the Jews, and in which he uttered words of all-comprehensive importance for the Church. There are three of these scenes which refer to the conflict between Christ and the Jews, on the question whether Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God.

### I.—CHAP. VIII. 12–20.

Ver. 12. “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world : he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”—*Ovv* in St John’s style merely marks the transition. They seem to attribute too much to it, who refer it to the fact, that the sitting of the Sanhedrim had issued in no result, the scheme of imprisoning Jesus having entirely failed. In that case, it must have been mentioned expressly at the end of ver. 7, just as in ch. viii. 20. *Aὐτοῖς*, unto them—those with whom in this series of events He commonly had to do, and with whom He deals, in ch. vii. down to ver. 44—the Jews. Jesus declares Himself here to be the light of the world, as in chap. vii. 37 the water of life. “It is,” says Luther, “a very offensive and very proud sermon that He gives them here, standing up before the great ones and learned doctors, and giving out that they were all blind fools in the darkness, while He, on the other hand, says of Himself : I am the light of the world.” Much must have already passed before Christ could speak of Himself as He does here, and generally throughout this whole part of the Gospel. He could not speak so unconditionally of Himself as the source of all salvation, and connect all things so absolutely with His own person, if he had not already, in words and deeds of power and love, let His nature beam forth, and prepared for Himself a name. The light of the world must needs be its Creator.

Jesus, when He says, “I am the light of the world,” declares Himself plainly to be He who in the beginning said, “Let there be light.” In this “let there be light,” a pledge is given to the creature that this light shall shine.

“*Dedignabitur salvare;*” says Augustin, “*qui dignatus est creare?*” It is needless to spend time in forming hypotheses, externally accounting for the saying of our Lord, by the rising of the sun, the kindling of the lamps in the temple, etc. If anything significant of this kind had taken place, the Apostle would not have left us to guess about it. Explanations such as, “The light, that is, the possessor, representative, and bearer of Divine truth, from whom that light goes forth into humanity,” could proceed only from those who are not at home in the Old Testament. Light is in the Old Testament the common term for salvation: comp. on ch. i. 4, and especially the passage there adduced, Isa. xlix. 6, where it is said, in reference to Christ, “I will also give Thee for a *light* to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the ends of the earth.” That the word light is used in the same sense here, is proved by what follows; for the *light* is said to consist in *life*: comp., with reference to the idea of *life*, the remarks on ch. i. 4. And the same is plainly expressed in the specific original passages of the Old Testament. These are, on the one hand, Isa. ix. 1: “The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light” (the sun is called, in Gen. i. 16, the “great light;” Malachi foretells, in ch. iv. 2, that with the coming of the “angel of the Lord” the saving “Sun of Righteousness” would rise on those who feared the name of God); “they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined,” where Christ appears as the light of the *Jews*; and, on the other hand, Isa. xlvi. 6, and xlix. 6. Jews and Gentiles are here combined together in the idea of the world. There can be no doubt as to the identity of light and salvation in these fundamental passages. The light in Isa. ix. 1 looks back to the darkness in Isa. viii. 22. This consisted, according to the express declaration of the prophet, in need and misery. “And He shall look upon the earth, and behold trouble and darkness, dimness of anguish; and they shall be driven to darkness.” Thus the light can be no other than salvation. The response of the Church to the Lord’s word here, “I am the light of the

world," is this, "Neither is there salvation in any other," Acts iv. 12. And in effect the Lord's words in Matt. xi. 28 seq. correspond also: Come unto Me, all ye who are troubled and heavy laden, and I will refresh you, etc.; the *καὶ γὰρ ἀνάπτωσιν ὑμᾶς*, and the *καὶ εὐρήσετε ἀνάπτωσιν ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν*, point back to vers. 31, 32, where Jehovah says, "Even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest;" proving also that Jesus assumed divinity to Himself.—The light or salvation refers not merely to the external course. For men, created after the image of God, the foundation of all salvation is the union of the soul with God, the only true God, without possessing whom there can be no rest, or peace, or satisfaction. Where this union exists, the uttermost external tribulation cannot interrupt the enjoyment of salvation: comp. Ps. iv. 7: "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased;" xlvi. 9, where that enjoyment is disturbed, the man must be internally unsaved and miserable, though lying in the very bosom of outward prosperity. The sinner, under all circumstances, walks in darkness, 1 John i. 6, ii. 11: yet the word of our Lord must approve its truth even in the external course, which accompanies the internal condition and reflects it. The issue of "I am the light of the world" here, is the "Ye shall die in your sins," in ver. 22. When Jesus represents Himself as the light of the world, He points to the deep night even of external misery which should come upon the Jews, as the consequence of their contempt and rejection of the light. In special reference to these, the formally general propositions are here spoken.—Christ is the light for the whole world; not merely for the "world of elect," as the modern reformed exposition imagines. The limitation which that exposition refers to Christ Himself, as if it existed in Him, lies rather in those to whom the light is offered: he that *followeth Me*: comp., for the results of spiritual following, on ch. i. 44. The commencement of this following is faith: comp. xii. 36.—"Shall not walk in darkness" rests upon Isa. ix. 1, "The people that walked in darkness." Lampe: "Thus formerly walked the Egyptians in darkness, when they persecuted Moses and Israel, Ex. xiv. 20. This judgment impended over all who, having darkened the light of the world, fall into reprobation and hardness, and, at the same time, external darkness.

They only could avoid it, who should leave the blind teachers and follow Jesus." Isaiah paints, in ch. viii. 22, the deep darkness of misery into which apostate Israel should fall in the future, and to which the manifestation of Christ should put an end. For those who scorned the only Saviour, the darkness continued, and even increased more and more. That which is here spoken in the form of a general sentence, Jesus, in ch. xii. 35, utters again with direct application to the Jews : " Yet a little while is the light with you ; walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." The general truth here declared has been confirmed in the destiny of the Jews ; and it is ever receiving new confirmation in the destiny of people and of individuals to whom Christ is offered. To those who follow Him, Jesus approves Himself the light of the world in all ages ; those who forsake are doomed inevitably to darkness, to internal and external ruin, and exclusion from salvation.

Ver. 13. " Then said the Pharisees unto Him, Thou bearest witness of thyself ; thy witness is not true."—" The conflict of Christ with the Jews," says Anton, " becomes more and more vehement. But this very antipathy declared that an illimitable distance must exist between His mind and their mind." Man has a natural desire for the light. We read in Eccles. xi. 7, " Light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is to see the sun." The assumption lying at the foundation of our Lord's saying, that mankind before Him and without Him lay buried in darkness, stands in harmony with " in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die," in Gen. ii. 17 ; and its truth has been, ever since that great catastrophe, enforced upon every man by his own experience. Notwithstanding, the antipathy of the natural man to Christ is so great, that he would rather be deprived of the light, and draw down upon himself the judgment of darkness, than make up his mind to follow Him. The Pharisees proceeded on the assumption that Christ was mere man, and consequently they thought the ancient saying applicable in His case : " Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth ; a stranger, and not thine own lips," Prov. xxvii. 2. A mere man, who speaks great things about himself, places himself absolutely in the position of one whose testimony is certainly not true. The higher he gives himself out to be, *λέγων εἶναι τινα ἔαυτὸν μέγαν*, Acts viii. 9, the lower he is in reality. True greatness is ever-

more, and in all things, humble and modest; as Moses, Num. xii. 3, "was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth," and as Paul declared himself to be the chief of sinners. The Pharisees did not reject—that would have been quite inconsistent—every testimony that any man might give concerning himself; they only protested against professions of the kind then before them; and the only error in their protest was, that they, through their own fault, were incapable in their darkness of discerning the true light in Christ.

Jesus first justifies His own testimony, and vindicates its validity, vers. 14–16. He then shows that His testimony stood not alone, but was confirmed by the testimony of the Father in His works. Or, Jesus, 1. answers that the pre-eminence of His person gave value to the testimony which He bore concerning Himself, ver. 12; as also that, on account of the internal relation in which He stood to God, even in His judgment upon others, He was not capable of deceiving or being deceived. 2. He declares that His testimony stood not alone, but that it received corroboration from the testimony of the Father.

Ver. 14. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of Myself, My record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and [otherwise, or] whither I go."—Jesus grasps and exposes the assumption on which the Pharisees' judgment rested. To apply to Him that proposition, which held good in human affairs and with mere man, was as foolish as if they would apply it to God. He came down from heaven, and was going back to heaven: comp. on ch. iii. 13. His present form of servitude, which the Pharisees could not in their wretched superficiality look through, was only a veil and a sphere of transition. He was, as to Himself, beyond the region in which clouds, dimness, illusion, self-pleasing, and pride, disturb the vision and the judgment. "If the sun could speak, and say, I am the sun; and thou shouldst reply, No, thou mayest be the night, because thou bearest witness of thyself,—would that seem reasonable?" In the "Though I bear record of Myself" was intimated, and it was afterwards expanded, that this state of the case was not the true one; but that, concurrently with the testimony of Christ to Himself, there was another, that of the Father. The main point coming into notice here is the being of Christ, absolutely

and sublimely elevated above all human things ; but with the being there was also the simultaneous consciousness ; and Christ was led to give prominence to His *knowledge*, that He might set over against it the ignorance of the Jews, which robbed their denial of His honour of all its force.

Vers. 15, 16. “Ye judge after the flesh ; I judge no man. And yet if I judge, My judgment is true ; for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me.”—Christ opposes His own judging to the judging of the Pharisees ; and He does this, because His judgment—the rigorous opposition to the Pharisaic nature and doings which He had from the beginning been constrained to exhibit—had been the occasion of their judgment upon Him : comp. on ver. 26. The judging of the Pharisees was without any significance, for it rested only and always on superficial views : on the other hand, Christ’s judging was of fearful moment, on account of that oneness with the Father which made all His decisions right. Whosoever is condemned by Him, as the Pharisees were, must tremble, since the destroying stroke must necessarily follow His sentence ; while, on the other hand, the judgment of the Pharisees upon Him was a mere beating the air, and had no other force than to lay bare its own superficiality and worthlessness. The judging after the flesh here corresponds to the judging according to the appearance in ch. vii. 24. Accordingly, the flesh is not the flesh of the Pharisees, their carnal mind to wit, but the flesh of Christ, His external human appearance, beyond which they, incapable of penetrating to the Spirit in His Divine nature, could not go, saying as they did, “Is not this the carpenter’s son ? is not his mother called Mary ?” etc., Matt. xiii. 55 ; and, “We know this man whence he is,” ch. vii. 27. To judge after the flesh is equivalent to judging after what the eyes see ; and it was said of Christ, in Isa. xi. 3, that He should not judge “after the sight of His eyes.” 1 Sam. xvi. 7 also sheds light upon it : “But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature ; because I have refused him : for not what man looks upon (do I look upon) ; for man (natural man, forsaken of God) looketh upon the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.” The “carnal passion” of those who judge here had no connection with the preceding words, in which all deeper knowledge of the nature of Christ is denied to

them. It is in perfect harmony with “Ye know not whence I am, or whither I go,” that it is said here that only the lower side of His being was accessible to them. Indeed, that they could only judge after the flesh, was the result of their fleshly mind, comp. 1 Cor. ii. 14, bound always to the visible and palpable. But this fleshly mind does not come expressly into view. *Augustin*: Secundum carnem judicatis, quia Deum non intelligitis, et hominem videtis, et hominem persequendo Deum latenter offenditis. And *Lyser*: Cum enim secundum carnem plus in me non cernatis quam  $\psi\lambda\delta\nu \alpha\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\sigma\nu$ : ideo judicatis me non posse mundi lucem esse. To judge concerning Christ after the flesh has ever been, and still is, the melancholy doom of those who have, by their own fault, robbed themselves of the means of forming a deeper judgment, and have thus entered the way of eternal ruin. The words, “I judge no man,” are a concomitant idea, which intimates that judging was not with Christ, as with the Pharisees, the proper sphere of His life: He came not to judge the world, but to save the world, ch. xii. 47. As the light of the world, He came to open the blind eyes and to save sinners, as the pattern of all His faithful servants, with whom judging is not the prominent work, but rather attraction, and the entreaty in Christ’s stead “Be ye reconciled to God.” (*Biza*: Ego vobis blande annuntio salutiferum nuntium, cum tamen meo jure utens ad inferos præcipitare vos possim.) Jesus does not disclaim a certain kind of judging, as many would supplement *κατὰ σάρκα*: He disclaims judgment generally. Nor does He disclaim judging, during a definite period, viz. the present. For, on the one hand, that would have required fuller statement; and, on the other, Christ did actually exercise judgment in the present. “In the very words, ‘I am the light of the world,’ ” says the Berlenberg Bible, “there is concealed a secret judgment upon the darkness.” At the same time that Jesus says, “I judge no man,” He is judging the Pharisees; and in ver. 26 He says, “I have many things to say and to judge of you.” That the words mean, that judgment was not the proper vocation of His life, the proper element in which He moved, is shown at once by what follows: comp. also ch. v. 22. There also judgment appears as the second and accessory thing. The first is the quickening, ver. 21. The judgment passes only upon those who blasphemously reject this saving power. It has

its proper ground, not in Christ, but in the objects on whom the judgment proceeds; so that they may be said, as it were, to condemn themselves. Because Christ is not alone, but in inseparable union with His heavenly Father, so, like His Father, He tries the hearts and the reins; and the Jews are constrained to tremble before His judgment.

Ver. 17. "It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. 18. I am one that bear witness of Myself, and the Father that sent Me beareth witness of Me." —Jesus had, up to this point, vindicated the validity of His own testimony. Here He intimates that this testimony was not alone, but that it was confirmed by the testimony of the Father. When Christ speaks of *their* law, He does not deny the obligation of that law upon His own followers, as it is taught everywhere in the New Testament, comp. Matt. v. 17 seq.; but He only signifies that they cannot evade or escape from the instances quoted from this law: comp. on ch. v. 39, and then ch. v. 45, xv. 25. The passages to which Jesus points are Deut. xvii. 6, "At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of *one* witness he shall not be put to death;" and Deut. xix. 15, "One witness shall not rise up against a man: at the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall the matter be established." Jesus does not quote the words of the legal ordinance, but only gives their substance. '*Ανθρώπων* is not found in the quoted passages, and therefore must have all the more significance. We have a conclusion *a minori ad majus*: "If according to the law the testimony of two men, who may be deceived, is sufficient, how much more the testimony of two Divine witnesses, who are highly exalted above all suspicion of error or deception!" Lyser: It might seem that the testimony of Jesus concerning Himself, although true, was without demonstrative power, since any one might say the same of himself. But it ought not to be forgotten that the utterance of Jesus had its support in the whole influence of His person and character, in the majesty and dignity of His manifestation, in the divine energy of His word, by which the officers of the council were so seized, that they said, "Never man spake like this man." Quesnel observes: "Christ is the only one who would give testimony to Himself. Man,

who of his own has nothing but lie and sin, must always be more suspicious of himself than any other.” Even Christ did not bear witness to Himself until God had borne witness to Him in the most manifold ways; and until His gentleness, His love, His patience, His unselfishness, His freedom from all pride, etc., had become publicly known. On the “Father beareth witness of Me,” comp. ch. x. 37, 38: “If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not; but if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works.”

Ver. 19. “Then said they unto Him, Where is thy father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know Me nor My Father: if ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also.”—It was not for a moment doubtful to the Jews whom Jesus referred to as His Father. It was the old controversy between Him and them, that they would not suffer Him to call God His Father in a particular and pre-eminent sense: comp. ch. v. 18. They do not ask, “Who is thy father?” but, “Where is thy father?” And their question intimated that His “Father” was something utopian, and that His conceit of being God’s Son was an idle fantasy, without any reality.—Christ intimates to them that they, by the wicked position which they assumed towards Him, closed against themselves the way to the knowledge of His Father. Whosoever places himself in opposition to Christ, can never know the Christian and only true God, the Father of Jesus Christ; for Christ is the bridge to that God whom not to know is to be without life and without salvation: comp. on ch. i. 18, v. 37, 38, vi. 46, xiv. 6, 9; Matt. xi. 27; 1 John ii. 23.—In reference to the manner of the Jews’ coming, Quesnel remarks: “All may desire and seek the knowledge of God and His mysteries in humble and sincere prayer, or with a mind full of evil design and unbelief, as we see here and among the learned of this world.” And Anton: “Holy and penitent ones deal with such questions in humility: it is a crimen læsæ majestatis divinæ to act as these did.”

Ver. 20. “These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as He taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on Him; for His hour was not yet come.”—The indication of the locality, as also the remark, “and no man,” etc., serves no other purpose than to mark off this scene from that which follows. There is

no actual connection between the statement of the locality and the preceding discourse. That the treasury was a place where a great multitude of men were wont to assemble, John could not suppose that his first readers knew without being told. The specific description of the locality shows that if John, in the following scenes, deals more in the general as to place, this was the result of design, and not of ignorance. Only an eye-witness could connect with the memory of the circumstance the exact place : this having in itself no specific relation to what passed there. The διδάσκων ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ is the *general* description. The Temple was the ordinary scene of Christ's teaching. The *treasury* we know from Mark xii. 41-44 (comp. Luke xxi. 1 seq.) : there Jesus sat before the treasury, and saw how the people placed in it their gifts ; here the treasury is named in a broader sense, including the spaces before it. According to many authorities, the treasury "consisted of thirteen brazen chests, destined to the customs and gifts." But these chests into which the gifts were cast, were only, so to speak, the mouth or opening of the treasury, its communication with the outer world. "*The treasury*" must mean the locality of the whole temple-treasure, which is mentioned by the Aramaic name ὁ κορβανᾶς, in Matt. xxvii. 6. This treasury was as ancient as the sanctuary in Israel. Mention is made of it in Deut. xxiii. 19, again in Josh. vi. 19, 24, according to which all the gold, etc., devoted in Jericho came into the "*treasury of the house of the Lord*." David placed the silver and the gold and the vessels in the treasury of the house of the Lord, 1 Kings vii. 51. In 2 Kings xii. 19, xvi. 8, we read of gold which was found in the treasures of the Lord's house, and of the house of the king. In 2 Macc. iii. is recorded the attempt of Heliodorus to penetrate into the treasure-house in Jerusalem, τὸ ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις γαζοφυλάκιον.

In ch. viii. 21-59, we have the second scene of the period between the Feast of Tabernacles and that of the Dedication.

Ver. 21. "Then said Jesus again unto them, I go My way, and ye shall seek Me, and shall die in your sins : whither I go, ye cannot come."—Lyser : "He would say : Ye plot and labour diligently day and night to put Me to death. But it needs not all this trouble : for I shall, after having finished the course of My work, of My own free will go away from you ; I shall

return by physical death to My Father, and at the same time with My Gospel take all My blessings with Me.” Jesus repeated in a more compendious form what He had said in ch. vii. 33, 34. The literal coincidence was an intentional one. It pointed them to the firmness of the Divine counsel, and exhorted them to make this great theme the object of their meditation. As is usual in the Scripture, when such words are repeated, there is here a significant change of the expression. Instead of “and ye shall not find Me,” in that passage, we have here, “and ye shall die in your sins.” That “sins” in these is a generic idea, and that we must not refer it to any single predominant sin, is shown by “Ye shall die in *your sins*,” ver. 24. In ch. ix. 41 also, “the sin” signifies the whole guilt of sin, which the Pharisees bore upon them; and in the same generic sense it occurs in 1 John i. 8. The sin of Pharisaic Judaism was concentrated in the position which it assumed towards Christ, comp. ch. xv. 22; and so far there is truth underlying the view which understands unbelief by the “sin” here. Faith, according to ver. 24, can free from the penalty of dying in sin. Sin, the entire of guilt, proceeds unto death only when the means of salvation held out by God are rejected, when the “ye would not” enters; and through the people’s guilt their sin *remained*.—“Ye shall die in your sins” means, according to the current exposition, “that they should die without being released from their sins, bound up in them,” and so forth. But the originals in the Old Testament show rather that “in your sins” is equivalent to “for your sins:” the effect is in the cause. In Num. xxvii. 3 the daughters of Zelophehad say: “Our father died in the wilderness—he died in his own sin.” There the בַּ is evidently the בַּ of the cause: comp. Ps. xc. 7. In Deut. xxiv. 16, “The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for (in) his own sin,” the בַּ corresponds to the preceding בָּ. In Ezek. xviii. 26, “When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them (עליהם); for his iniquity (בְּעֲוֹלָתוֹ) that he hath done shall he die,” בַּ is interchangeable with בָּ, and בַּ defines evidently the cause. The effect is rooted in the cause, or rests upon it. Sin appears as the cause of death or misery, even in the legal phrase, “bear-

ing his sin or his iniquity," Lev. v. 1, and elsewhere. Knobel : " Bearing it, that is, in its power and effect, experiencing its consequences, and bearing its punishment." Sin wilfully persisted in drags its victim to death. An inevitable doom is not here spoken of. Jesus says in the following words expressly, "if ye believe not." He would only lay it on their hearts that it was high time for them to believe. Berl. Bibel : "He would thereby awaken their reflection and touch their hearts, that they might perceive their state before the end came."

Ver. 22. "Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come."—The Jews do not bethink themselves of repenting, while they hear the severe exhortations and threatenings of Jesus; they rather assume the position which the Jews assumed in the time of Jeremiah. When the prophet denounced against them the judgments of God, they said, "We will walk in our own imaginations, and every one of us do according to the desires of his heart." Instead of entering into themselves, they rather sought to convict Jesus of some inconsistency. The Jews did not really think that Jesus might kill Himself, nor must we regard their words as mere mockery. Christ had spoken of His going away as an act of His own free will, which would serve as an infliction of punishment upon His enemies, who would fall through His departure into inevitable destruction. How Christ could thus speak of such a going away, appeared to them incomprehensible. They thought they had Him unconditionally in their power. Only by killing Himself—which He, however, would certainly not do—could He reach a place which would be beyond the reach of their power. The mistake was, that they regarded the voluntary departure of Jesus as the opposite of the death which they designed for Him: it did not enter into their minds, carried away by a fancied independence, that they could be mere instruments in a higher hand: comp. ch. x. 18, xviii. 6, from which we perceive that, in a certain sense, Christ inflicted death upon Himself.

Ver. 23. "And He said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. 24. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." —Jesus does not reply to the interruption of the Jews, but

carries further the thought that had been expressed in ver. 21. The antithesis of *above* and *beneath* is that of earth and heaven, as is shown by the explanatory second member, where the “of this world” corresponds to the “from beneath.” This is also the constant usage of Scripture: wherever we find the general contrast of above and below, it always refers to earth and heaven: comp., for example, Ex. xx. 4, “which is in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath;” Ps. l. 4, “He shall call to the heavens above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people;” Acts ii. 19, “And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath;” Col. iii. 1, 2, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth;” Eph. iv. 9. To the *ἐκ τῶν κάτω* corresponds, in Ps. x. 18, the man of the earth. The lower region, the earth, is from Gen. iii. downwards, the place of sin, and consequently of death. He who belongs merely and absolutely to the earth, cannot escape from sin, and from death, its necessary consequence. Only a relation to *heaven* can effect the soul’s freedom. Noah walked with God, and became, as the result, a righteous man among his contemporaries; and, in consequence of his righteousness, he escaped the judgment of death which came upon the whole collective earthly creation, Gen. vi. 9. Enoch walked with God, and became accordingly partaker of eternal life, Gen. v. 24. Since in Christ the upper world came down into the lower, freedom from sin and from death can be obtained only through union with Him. To believe on Christ is the only means whereby we can be lifted above the lower regions of the earth, and consequently be delivered from that sin and death in which he is buried past recovery, who despises the saving hand stretched out to him. “Ye are of this world,” which since the Fall has lain in the evil one. Anton: “And thus we are sundered; there is a great gulf fixed between you, such as you now are, and Me.” This gulf could be filled up only in one way—by their believing that *He was* (ch. xiii. 19), that is, that He was the absolute, the central Personality. The original Scriptures of the Old Testament show that this is the right interpretation: first of all, Deut. xxxii. 39, “See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no God with Me,” Sept. ἵδετε ἵδετε ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι; then Ps. cii.

27, "But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end ;" Isa. xli. 4, "I am He," יְהוָה אֶחָד ; xlivi. 10, "That ye may understand that I am He ; before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me." Michaelis : Ens illud unicum summum et verum. All these fundamental passages refer to God. They all of them have at their basis the Divine name Jehovah, by which God is declared to be pure absolute Being ; and by referring so directly to these passages, Christ arrogated to Himself no less than the full and perfect Godhead. So His enemies themselves understood it. If the Jews would not fill up the awful gulf in this the only possible way, they must die in their sins. A comparison with the original prophecy shows that these words primarily pointed to a national catastrophe, and were fulfilled in the destruction of the city by the Romans. The Good Shepherd, Christ, receives in Zech. xi. 4 the commission to "feed the flock of the slaughter," the people abandoned to ruin. The mission of Christ is in that early prophecy, even as here, represented as a final endeavour to save the people, whom their sins, like the wind, bear away to destruction, Isa. lxiv. 6. In Zech. xi. 9, the Good Shepherd says, after His earnest endeavours had all been scorned, "I will not feed you : that that dieth, let it die ; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off ; and let the rest eat every one the flesh of another." Ver. 28 also points to a national catastrophe : comp. Matt. xxiii. 37, 38. Quesnel draws from our present passage this conclusion : "We must, by setting their fearful danger before them, constrain sinners to fly to the arms of Jesus Christ, the sinner's only help."

Ver. 25. "Then said they unto Him, Who art thou ? And Jesus said unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning."—"From the beginning, that which I say unto you." The following comment is altogether wrong: "Such terms as Light of the world, Pourer out of water, The Sent of God, were to the Jews simply indefinite ideas ; they wanted to hear of the King of Israel, or the like." The Jews were not in any uncertainty as to who Christ would make Himself : the ἐγώ εἰμι was to them, expert in the Scriptures as they were, quite sufficient to make that plain. They would, by the question, "Who art thou ?" only remind Him that they did not acknowledge Him in His assumed dignity ; that there was still a *question*

about this dignity, and consequently that the conclusions which He drew from it were unsound. They would, by their question, challenge Him to consider the whole matter once more, and to save Himself from such boundless and fearful presumption : comp. the *τίνα σεαυτὸν ποιεῖς*, ver. 53, and the *σὺ ἀνθρωπὸς ὃν ποιεῖς σεαυτὸν Θεόν*, ch. x. 33.<sup>1</sup> Anton : “ One could wish to think that there was in their question the beginning of submission and change of mind ; as Saul’s conversion began with a question, Lord, who art Thou ? But there is no *Lord* in the question of His enemies here.”—In Christ’s answer we must, as is now generally acknowledged, read *ὅ τι*, since *ὅτι* gives no reasonable sense. Before or after the *τὴν ἀρχήν* we must supplement, from the question, *εἰμί, I am.*<sup>2</sup> *Ἀρχή*, in the New Testament, always means *beginning* (apart, that is, from the signification *dominion*, of which we take no account here) ; and it is used specifically of the beginning of created things, of finite existence, of the world or creation : comp. on ch. i. 1. The accusative is used as an adverb, “ originally” (comp. Buttmann, p. 134); so that, in reality, *τὴν ἀρχήν* is equivalent to *ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς*, or *κατ’ ἀρχᾶς*, Heb. i. 10. The signification “ altogether or absolutely” would take us out of the domain of New Testament phraseology, as also out of that of the Alexandrian version. In this latter, *τὴν ἀρχήν* stands for “ In the beginning,” Gen. xli. 21, xlvi. 20 ; Dan. viii. 1. In classical usage, also, the signification “ beginning,” or “ originally,” is the first and most frequent. Schweighæuser, in the *Lex. Herod.*, remarks : “ Accusativus *ἀρχήν* adverbialiter positus proprie significat initio, principio, ab initio ;” and he gives copious illustrations from Herodotus, such as xi. 28, *ὡς ἀρχὴν ἐγένετο*, as it was originally. *In the beginning*, in the creation of the world, Christ manifested Himself, or made Himself known, in the attribute which He arrogated, ver. 24 (comp. Heb. i. 10) ; and so onwards throughout His whole administration in the

<sup>1</sup> Lyser here gives the true meaning : “ Sarcastice, vanitatis et jactantiae eum in simulantes, quasi ambitiose nimis magnifica de se ipso prædicaret, quæ nunquam præstare posset. Atque sic non denunciatum Dei judicium reformidarunt, nec ejusdem gratiam benigne oblatam suscipere volebant.”

<sup>2</sup> Beza : Hæc est natura responsionum, ut in iis repetatur verbum positum in quæstione.

history of the Old Testament. Christ is everywhere where Jehovah is, and His Angel. If we take the *τὴν ἀρχήν* in this sense,—in special harmony with John's phraseology, “In the beginning was the Word,” and “the same was in the beginning with God,” ch. i. 1, 2; *δὴν ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς*, 1 John i. 1; *ἔγνωκατε τὸν ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς*, ii. 13, 14,—then the “I am He” corresponds, by which Jesus, in ver. 24, identifies Himself with the Jehovah of the Old Testament: so also vers. 39, 40, in which Abraham is placed in relation to Christ; ver. 56, in which Abraham saw His day; ver. 57, in which Christ saw Abraham; ver. 58, in which Christ was before Abraham was, and that not in a latent being, but in such a being as was made known by manifestation. The *τὴν ἀρχήν* here corresponds, then, with the *ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς* in ver. 44 concerning Satan. From the beginning of the world, Christ and Satan have been the two spiritual powers opposed to each other. The *τὴν ἀρχήν*, then, finds its commentary in the *πάντα δὶ’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο*, ch. i. 3; the *ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ*, Rev. iii. 14; and the *δὶ’ οὐκαὶ τοὺς αἰῶνας ἐποίησε*, Heb. i. 2. It is without reason alleged against this interpretation,—which, to the shame of many ecclesiastical expositors, Fritzsche has had to bring out again, sum a rerum primordiis (cf. i. 1) ea natura, quam me esse profiteor,—that such a manner of speaking would have been simply unintelligible to the Jews; for this objection is set at nought by all the other testimonies of Christ concerning His pre-human existence in this self-same chapter. The Jews had points of connection enough for it, if their hearts had only been right before the Lord: the entire Old Testament doctrine of the Angel of Jehovah, and the prophetic announcement that this Angel would one day appear as the Messiah, Mal. iii. 1; Zech. xi. It has been shown in the Christology (vol. iii. Clark's Translation), that the true understanding of the Old Testament facts here concerned was widely diffused amongst the Jews; and to these we must add the lofty predicates, rising into divinity, which are attributed to the Messiah in Isa. ix. 5, Micah v. 1, 3; and the manifestation of the Messiah in the clouds of heaven, as the Lord of nature, as the Almighty Judge, in Dan. vii. 13, 14. Nor is there force in the objection, that this interpretation is discordant with the preceding question of the Jews, which referred not to the pre-existence but to the personality of

Jesus : for the pre-existence was an essential element in the personality of Jesus ; and our Lord does not limit Himself to the assumption of pre-existence, but at the same time declares that His being was absolutely congruent with that which He said concerning Himself, the *kai* referring to this congruence between the being and the words. But the *ἀρχήν* was the specific sting to the minds of His enemies. He made them feel that all opposition was vain, and that it could end only in their destruction. “ Jésus,” says Quesnel, “ a une vie, qui n'a jamais commencée et que tous les efforts de ses ennemis ne peuvent faire finir.” Because Christ is the Alpha, He is also the Omega ; because He was from the beginning on the scene, the end also must belong to Him.

Let us now throw a glance over the explanations which soften this away. The rendering nearest to ours is, “ I am that which I said unto you from the beginning.” But if we thus supply the *εἰμί* before instead of after the *τὴν ἀρχήν*, we encounter the following double difficulty. 1. The *τὴν ἀρχήν* ought not then to stand in the beginning : the rejoinder, that it was placed first because of emphasis, would be valid only if it came after *ὅτι* ; but this entirely forces the construction. 2. Instead of the Present, *λαλῶ*, it ought to have been the Perfect. The *λαλῶ* plainly points to the *ἐγώ εἰμι*, by which Jesus had attributed to Himself divinity. And, further, the *originally* then receives no clear and sure explanation. It would be obvious to refer it to the beginning of His appearance amongst them ; but Jesus did not then publicly proclaim Himself as the true and only Son of God. It was His aim first to approve Himself such in act.—Against the interpretation favoured by Luther, “ Principio (id vobis respondeo) me eum esse, qui vobiscum loquar,” Beza has observed, Hæc expositio coacta est et frigidam sententiam parit : denique etiam Gr. codicibus repugnat, in quibus legitur *ὅτι τι, non ὅς*. *Ἀρχήν* also does not mean *firstly*, or *at first*.—Finally, the interpretation, “ Generally, wherefore do I speak to you ?” adopts all possible artifice only to find an intolerable meaning.

Ver. 26. “ I have many things to say and to judge of you : but He that sent Me is true ; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him.”—After Jesus had answered their question, He enters into the psychological motive which

had brought them forward. The word of Micah, ch. ii. 11, was here approved true: "If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie, saying, I will prophesy to thee of wine and strong drink, he shall even be the prophet of this people;" and that other, in ch. iii. 8, where Micah opposes himself to false prophets, and says: "But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin." If Christ had made war against the Romans, whom they hated, instead of against the sins which they loved,—if He had directed the lightning-glance of His divinity against foes without,—the Jews would have admitted with joy the utmost that He declared concerning His own person. The fundamental repentance which He demanded was the real offence, and not the "I am He" of itself. They must contend against His divinity, because it was a consuming fire for their sins, in which they desired still to continue. "I have many things to say and to judge of you"—that is the reason why ye will not receive My declarations concerning My own person—"but," etc. If what Jesus said rested entirely upon God, and if it was therefore absolutely true, all was placed in a new light, and it was reason, not for alienation and hatred, but for true repentance. Unreasonably comparing ch. xvi. 12, some have thought that the "I have many things to say of you" refers to such things as Jesus could say, but would not say; whereas the true meaning is rather this: "I must also say and judge many things of you." Jesus never shows Himself, in relation to the Jews, disposed to keep back or restrain anything. The strongest that could be said, He always tells them to their face. Here, in what immediately precedes, He had exercised this judgment upon them in the most earnest manner; and in what immediately follows He continues the same strain.—Jesus does not say, "I speak unto you," but, "I speak to the world." This points to the fact, that what He here first speaks in a narrow circle, is not destined for that narrow circle alone, but has a significance for all ages; and that its being opposed and scorned temporarily was of little significance, since it was destined to run its course, and have its effect in ages to come. If Jesus was truly the light of the world, it was self-understood, that all things which He spake in the obscurest corner of Judea were spoken out into all the world.

Ver. 27. "They understood not that He spake to them of the Father."—An interpretation of these words which makes the Jews appear senseless and stupid, cannot, in the nature of things, be the right one. From a theoretic inability on their part, Jesus would have delivered them by a more explicit declaration; but, instead of that, He threatens them, in ver. 28, with the punishment of unbelief. The meaning cannot therefore be, that they did not externally understand our Lord's words. Throughout the whole of this portion of the Gospel, the accusation which the Jews made against Christ was, that He arrogated to Himself divinity. The seizing, and stoning, and putting to death—which is everywhere the Jews' watchword—all rest upon this ground. In ch. v. 18 they would kill Jesus, because He πατέρα ἴδιον ἔλεγε τὸν Θεὸν, ἵσον ἐαυτὸν ποιῶν τῷ Θεῷ; and in ch. x. 33 they raise the complaint against Him, σὺ ἀνθρωπός ὦν ποιεῖς σεαυτὸν Θέον. But this mere external knowledge is not acknowledged by John as true knowledge. True knowledge only exists where there is devout sinking into the mystery full of grace and blessedness. But the father of whom they thought was not the true Father, but only an airy imagination of their own minds. With the Son they had also lost the Father. John—in deep grief at the perversion of human nature, which has no vision of the most comforting of all mysteries—charges them, not with theoretical inability, but with hardness of heart. The not knowing here is the same as that of which Christ speaks in Matt. xi. 25; and, in reality, ch. xii. 37 is in harmony with this: "Although He had done so many miracles among them, yet believed they not on Him." And this shows how ver. 28 is connected with that which we now consider. There the Jews are threatened with the punishment of the unbelief which is here alleged against them.

Vers. 28, 29. "Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things. And He that sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him."—The *lifting up* refers to the crucifixion: comp. on ch. iii. 14 (Augustin: Exaltationem dicit passionis, non glorificationis, crucis non cœli: quin et ibi exaltatus est, quando pependit de ligno). It cannot be the glorification of

Christ, because it was to be effected by the people. "Then shall ye know that I am He," derives its more definite meaning from "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins," in ver. 24. They maintain and approve their unbelief by the lifting up of the Son of man, and therefore the result follows. In this connection, which manifestly speaks only of the relation of guilt and punishment, we must not think of a saving knowledge as intended; and we must reject all such remarks as these: "Whoever was susceptible, must have received from the martyrdom of this most holy servant of God such an impression as that he must acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah." In their downfall and ruin the hardened Jews discerned that Christ was God. We must also reject the comparison with ch. xii. 32: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." Christ is not there speaking, as He is here, to exasperated enemies. Individuals of their number might be converted; but of the whole race (and it is that which Jesus has here in view) it remained true, that they accomplished their blasphemy, and fell under its doom.—The knowing here spoken of is that which is enforced by facts; and it is indifferent whether or not those here meant pushed their self-blinding and self-hardening so far as to deny what was plainly made manifest. The words of our Lord rest upon an Old Testament foundation. We read in Ex. x. 20, "And ye shall know that I am the Lord,"—by the wonders and signs which I will perform on the Egyptians. But still nearer to our text is a series of passages in Ezekiel, in which "And ye shall know that I am the Lord" recurs continually as the burden of threatenings upon Israel. So, in ch. vii. 4, it is said, "And Mine eye shall not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense thy ways upon thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of thee; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." And in ch. xi. 10: "Ye shall fall by the sword: I will judge you in the border of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." And in ch. xii. 20: "And the cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall be desolate; and ye shall know that I am the Lord:" comp. ch. vi. 7, 13. By reference to all these sayings, Christ identifies Himself with Jehovah; and they are of importance, further, to our present purpose, inasmuch as they prove that the Lord here has only an enforced knowledge in view, and does

not speak of a voluntary and experimental knowledge. We find parallels in the other Gospels,—for example, in Matt. xxiii. 38, 39, and xxiv. 2, where Jesus, after the disciples had shown Him all the buildings of the Temple, says, “ See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” So Luke xix. 40 : “ And He answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out,” where the stones are the stones of Jerusalem to be destroyed,—an allusion to Hab. ii. 11, the only passage of Scripture, too, in which we have crying stones.

The following “and I do nothing of Myself,” etc., for the present are merely an assertion to the Jews. The connection with “when ye shall have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know,” points to the fact, that one day the words would approve themselves true, in the terror of those who now made them matter of mockery. To the domain of *doing* belongs, according to what follows, the *speaking* also. “The Father hath not left Me alone,” that is, when He sent Me forth. That was the decisive point. If He accompanied Jesus then, it followed that He was with Him continually. The objection that this view does not suit the reason which Christ goes on to give, has no point; since that Christ always did what was pleasing to the Father, was grounded in His nature, and thus must have been foreseen and anticipated by the Father. We must compare with the ὅτι ἐγὼ τὰ ἀρεστὰ αὐτῷ ποιῶ πάντοτε, Isa. xlvi. 1 and Ps. xl. 9. “If we, following His example, are always faithful to God,” says Quesnel, “we shall always have Him with us.” Jesus assuredly spoke what is written in vers. 28, 29, with the gentlest emphasis (Bengel : Hæc summâ cum suavitate dixit dominus), so that those who still had any heart to feel must have felt it keenly, as indeed ver. 30 shows they did. The feeling was the same as that of Luke xix. 41, where the Lord looked upon Jerusalem and wept over it.

Ver. 30. “As He spake these words, many believed on Him.”—A glance of light; comp. ch. vii. 31, 46. How they gave expression to their faith, is not here expressly stated. Doubtless it was by some confession which they made in the presence of the unbelieving multitude.

Vers. 31, 32. “Then said Jesus to those Jews which be-

lied on Him, If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed ; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”—The Lord’s address to them shows, on the one hand, that they were in earnest ; and, on the other, that they were only as yet in the good beginnings. “If ye continue in My word” (comp. ch. xv. 7 : ἐὰν μείνητε ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ τὰ ῥήματά μου ἐν ὑμῖν μείνῃ) points to the perverting influences which would strive to alienate them again from His words. The parable of the sower, Matt. xiii. 20–22, furnishes a commentary on the dangers which threaten the seed of the word of God—trial and persecution (comp. “no man shall pluck them out of My hand,” ch. x. 28), the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches. Quesnel : “*Continuing* therein means not merely to have a transitory taste of the word, not merely the loving certain truths, not merely practising part of them, and that externally : it does not mean a few moments, a few months, or a few years ; it signifies the loving all His truths, the practising them steadily through the whole of life, and the making His law a joy and a delight.” On “ye shall know the truth,” the Berlenberg Bible says : “Some knowledge must certainly go before faith. But if we are faithful in that little knowledge, however little, we come through that believing obedience to a true and full knowledge ; so that we do in the act of obedience learn what our duty is. Thus knowledge grows with fidelity.” The meaning therefore is, Ye shall know the truth more and more fully. That which in itself is only a gradual difference and increase, is here uttered in the form of absolute antithesis ; because, in comparison of the knowledge which they should receive in the way of their future fidelity, their present knowledge vanished to nothing. The truth here is not merely theoretic and in the mind ; but it is that which took flesh and blood in Christ, who said, I am the Truth. As they proceeded to know Christ more and more profoundly, they more and more profoundly would know the truth,—that truth for which, as for freedom, every man not entirely degraded experiences a fervent, natural longing ; and that living truth would make them free from the slavery of sin and error, while merely theoretical truth is to this end perfectly powerless. The same effect of emancipation which is here attributed to the truth, is in ver. 36 attributed to Christ.

In the words, “shall make you free,”—primarily from sin, the true bondage, the worst of all bondage, but also from its reflection, the slavery of this world,—the Lord designedly throws an apple of discord amongst the Jews, who must have felt themselves greatly humbled to hear that they, the supposed lords of the world, were to be first delivered from slavery by Jesus. This one word (Bengel : Semper id potissimum locutus est, quod oppugnaret præjudicia hominum) gave occasion to the most violent encounter between Jesus and the Pharisees which the Gospel records ; in which Jesus calls them liars and children of the devil, and which reaches such a pitch of fury in the Jews, that they take up stones to stone Him. Lyser makes upon this the reflection, that the Gospel cannot always be preached in a gentle manner, but that sometimes its stiff-necked enemies must be vigorously and decisively contended against in defence of the truth. We have here the counterpart of that love and tenderness in which Jesus, as a pattern to His disciples on this same occasion, does not despise the germ of faith just beginning to be, but accepts it and nourishes it, and seeks by salutary exhortations to further it towards maturity.

Ver. 33. “They answered Him, We be Abraham’s seed, and were never in bondage to any man : how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free ?”—Those who answer here are not specifically those Jews who had begun to believe in Jesus, but the Jews generally ; the same to whom the *αὐτοῖς* in vers. 12, 21, refers, and with whom Jesus has ordinarily to do in this section, the superscription of which might be, *Jesus and the Jews*. What follows does not exhibit in them the slightest trace of faith. Jesus contends against hardened and exasperated enemies who would kill Him, who declare that He is possessed with an evil spirit, who take up stones to stone Him, and whom He terms liars and children of him who was the murderer of mankind from the beginning. John was far too tenacious of reality to ascribe *faith* to such a people merely on the ground of a superficial and transitory feeling ; Christ, who knew what was in man, would not have expended upon such the address of ver. 31. “It is not to be supposed,” says the Berl. Bible, “that they could spring back again so suddenly. Commonly such a change comes by degrees, when people are not faithful to their convictions.” The unbelieving Jews re-

gard Christ's words as if they were addressed to them. And this they do with good reason. In the words, "shall make you free," they heard a severe attack upon themselves, an annihilation of all their high-minded pretensions, and a reduction of them as a people to the level of the Gentile world. To what end were they the people of God, if they were as much without the noblest of all possessions as the heathen themselves?

Jesus had not spoken of external freedom, but of that which even a slave might enjoy. And, on that very account, the Jews could not have had political freedom in view, when they rejoined that they had never been in bondage to any. If their words are made to refer to political bondage, they have no semblance of truth in them whatever. They were at that time in bondage to the Romans; and their Scriptures in various places testify that the people of God had often fallen into external slavery. It was originally foretold to Abraham, that his seed should be strangers and servants in a land not theirs, Gen. xv. 13. In Ex. xx. 2 we read, "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." In the book of Judges we have one bondage following another in rapid succession. It is said of Nebuchadnezzar, in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 20, "And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon, where they were servants to him and his sons;" and with reference to the Persian period, we read in Neh. ix. 36, "Behold, we are servants this day." Thus the Jews must have had something else in their thoughts when they said, "We were never in bondage unto any man." To be free and to have dominion is a prerogative of the true people of God, which can never at any time suffer interruption, and which is not interfered with or suspended, even by external bondage. The true seed of Abraham are, according to Ex. xix. 6, a "kingdom," a sovereign people. Under all circumstances, their enemies shall be found liars unto them, or be subjected, and they shall tread upon their high places (Ex. xxxiii. 29); so that even to their conquerors the people of God give laws. They always mount very high, and never sink very low, Deut. xxviii. 13, 43, "above only, and not beneath." The true Church of God has never been enslaved. Even in its external bondage it has preserved its nobility and its superiority. Israel, under all circumstances,

is "princess among the provinces," Lam. i. 1. We have only to think of Moses before Pharaoh king of Egypt, or Daniel in presence of the Chaldean king: this latter was a servant of that king, and yet in ch. v. he is that king's lord and judge; the proud Nebuchadnezzar in ch. ii. falls down before him. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty and dominion. The heathen are, in spite of their external dominion, slaves; the members of the true Israel are ever, in spite of their external bondage, lords; comp. Lam. v. 8, "servants have ruled over us," and Eccles. x. 7, "I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth," —a perverted world, in which servants ride and masters walk. The book of Ecclesiastes often dwells on the thought that Israel, externally brought under the bondage of heathenism, still retains its absolute superiority over the heathen world, through the undisturbed possession of wisdom from above, through the word and Spirit of God. External power must in due time follow and sue unto wisdom, ch. vii. 11, 12, 19, 20, ix. 13–18, "Wisdom is better than weapons of war," etc.

Thus the rejoinder of the Jews has a deep truth lying at its foundation. Freedom must never be measured or estimated by external appearances. True freedom and true pre-eminence can never be wanting to God's people; were it ever to be so, the kingdom of God would be turned into a fantasy and a lie. But theirs was a twofold error. 1. In opposition to the spirit of the whole Old Testament, they referred that which belonged to the election, to the people as a mass of flesh and blood. The dominion of the world was guaranteed to the seed of Abraham as such; but in order to belong to the true seed of Abraham, quite other conditions are required than merely bodily derivation. 2. They overlooked the fact that, according to the testimony of all the prophets of Israel, the full height of the destiny of the people was to be attained first and only in Christ. "O vanity of the children of Adam," observes Quesnel, "who boast themselves of their nobility, because they do not know their degradation through sin." Their external bondage was not so insignificant a thing as the Jews would represent it. It was only the reflection of the loss of internal nobility on the part of the great mass of the people.

Ver. 34. "Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto

you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."—The Jews had arrogated freedom to themselves, and grounded their assertion on the fact that they were the seed of Abraham. Jesus now first shows that freedom does not belong to them, and then that they are not the true descendants of Abraham. (Bengel: Jesus exceptioni duplici Judæorum inverso ordine respondet; et primum orationem de *libertate* pertexit, deinde de Abrahæ liberis disserit.)

With reference to the "verily, verily," Lyser says: "He would speak concerning a great matter, and one which the Jews would hardly tolerate; therefore He most earnestly strengthens His word." Underneath the general proposition, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin," the specific one lies concealed, "Ye who commit sin are the servants of sin." Jesus points them back from their empty pretensions to the naked reality. They boasted of their freedom, whilst they found themselves in the vilest slavery—the slavery of sin. It was this which Jesus held out against them, and not their bondage to the Romans: the question was not of external, but of spiritual dignity. Even the elect were also subjected to the bondage of the Romans; and that came into consideration only indirectly, and as the reflection of the slavery of which our Lord here speaks.—The slavery of sin had been indirectly referred to in Gen. iv. 7; for when Cain was there admonished, "Thou shalt rule over it," the idea was involved that Cain was in danger of being ruled over by sin. And it is directly treated of in Ps. xix. 44, "Keep back Thy servant from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me." These proud sins, in opposition to sins of infirmity, ver. 13, are those presumptuous and designed sins which are here personified as tyrants, and which accordingly strive to bring the servant of God under their unworthy bondage. And this passage of the psalm seems to lie at the foundation of our Lord's saying, as well as of St Paul's in Rom. vi. 14. It is all the more expressly related to our present text, inasmuch as it proves that the bondage of sin is a danger which threatens even amongst the people of God. We may also compare 1 Kings xxi. 20, "And Ahab said unto Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he said, I have found thee, because thou hast sold thyself to do evil in the sight of the Lord" (Michaelis: Et mancipium es

teterrimorum vitiorum). So also ver. 25, "There was none like unto Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the Lord." Finally, 2 Kings xvii. 17, where it is said of the ten tribes, "and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger," with allusion to Deut. xxviii. 68, "And there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen." That which was there spoken of external slavery, is here transferred to the internal. St Paul has these passages of the Kings in view in the words of Rom. vii. 14, *πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἀμαρτίαν*. Heathen philosophers also speak much about the slavery of sin. But the depth of this debasement they could not understand; and hence they thought that every man might defend himself from it by his own power, and by his own power deliver himself again.

Ver. 35. "And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever."—It has been observed without propriety, "First, there is described, in a general proposition of common civil life, the opposite relation of the slaves and the son to the house in which both are." The servant is rather the slave in the sense defined, ver. 34,—a servant of this sort. The sentence is a universal one. But servants, in the ordinary sense, remain, according to circumstances, always in the house, so that the general statement does not suit them. The slave was, in the seventh year of his servitude, made free. But if he preferred to remain in subjection, the new relation was to be sealed by a rite prescribed in Deut. xv. 17: "And," it is there said, "he shall be thy servant for ever;" Sept. *καὶ ἔσται σοι οἰκέτης εἰς τὸν αἰώνα*. But the statement of our passage is the less appropriate to the general relation, inasmuch as the violent ejection of the slave is referred to, and then only very seldom occurred. That which takes place with servants in the ordinary sense—viz. their being cast out when they are useless, as we see in the example of Hagar and her son, who was driven out of the house because of her evil conduct towards the son, while that son remained in it, Gen. xxi. 10; Gal. iv. 30,<sup>1</sup>—a case which probably was, in our Lord's view here—that takes place with slaves of

<sup>1</sup> Calvin: Locum occupabunt in ecclesia Dei, sed qualem Ismael ad breve tempus sibi usurpaverat, servus libero fratri insultans. Lyser: Hæc expulsio servorum peccati ex domo Dei adumbrata fuit in Ismaele, qui et ipse per annos c. xiv. vixit in familia Abr.

this kind without exception.—If the servant is to be taken in a spiritual sense, then the house must be taken in a spiritual sense, as the designation of the kingdom of God, which in the Old Testament was represented by a house, the Temple, constantly spoken of as the spiritual dwelling-house of the whole covenant people. (On the Temple as a symbol of the kingdom of God, consult my *Beiträge*, iii. S. 631.) This spiritual house must be thought of here, especially as the second member, ὁ νιὸς μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, refers to Ps. xxiii. 6, “And I dwell in the house of the Lord for ever;” and Ps. xxvii. 4, “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,”—where the house of the Lord is the Temple, as the ideal dwelling-place of the people of God, and the symbol of the Church. In 1 Tim. iii. 15; 2 Tim. ii. 20; Eph. ii. 19, the Church appears under the figure of the house of God. The servant is primarily and formally an ideal person, meaning no other than “whosoever committeth sin.” But the general proposition is uttered with special reference to the relations then existing between Christ and these Jews. The application is, “And so ye cannot abide in the house of God, because ye are such servants of sin.” If the servant is primarily an ideal person, then the son must also be an ideal person; in favour of which is Ps. xxiii. 6, where not David is speaking, but the true Israel, thus a real multitude. Both reasons are against those who, like Lampe, understand here by the son Christ Himself, absolutely and exclusively. The son, in the spiritual sense, is he who stands to the Lord of the spiritual house in the same relation which the spiritual son sustains to the Father—that of the most internal fellowship of love; as, on the ground of this relation, Israel is in the Old Testament termed the son of God, e.g. in Ex. iv. 22; Hos. xi. 1: comp. on the idea of Son of God my commentary on Ps. ii. 7, where, amongst other things, it is said, “Where God in the Old Testament is represented as Father, where the subject is sonship of God, there is concise reference to His internal love as similar to that of a father towards a son: comp. passages which develop the comparison, such as Ps. ciii. 13.”—The ideal person of the Son is here primarily represented by the actual person of Christ; but there also by those whom He has freed from the bondage of sin, and introduced into the inward and spiritual communion with

God: comp. ch. i. 12, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God."—The general proposition, applied to the case in hand, is this: The ungodly Jews will be cast out of the kingdom of God, and that kingdom abideth to Christ and His true members: comp. Matt. viii. 12, xxi. 43. Anton: "Because they thought they belonged to the house of God absolutely, on account of Abraham and as his seed, Christ tells them to say nothing more about that. The evening of all days had not yet come. Such people as they were could not abide in the house of God; but the Son abideth ever, and all who have part in Him. This was their loophole: We belong to the kingdom of God nevertheless, we are members of the Church. But Christ says, This will not avail you. Although ye be for a while *membra ecclesiae*, ye must not allege that. It only adds to your great responsibility; since God received you into His house that ye might become pious children, but ye show what a slavish spirit is yours. Out of My house! for this must not go on always."

Ver. 36. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."—This clause is connected with ver. 34, where beneath the general proposition the special one was concealed: "Ye, because ye commit sin, are servants of sin." Ver. 35—which contains only a bye-thought, pointing to the ruinous consequences of sin, and the loss which it entails of the noblest of all possessions, participation in the wisdom of God—only comes into consideration so far as it must urge the Jews eagerly to desire the good that was offered to them in Christ. *Thus*, since ye are the servants of sin, ye are not free of the house, as ye think.—Christ might have said, If I make you free. But He speaks of Himself as the Son, in order to point out that the sonship of which ver. 35 had spoken had its foundation in Himself, so that no man could be a partaker of it who stands not in living connection with Him: comp. ch. i. 12. Berl. Bible: "Here the words rise to the Son, from whom all the other children of grace derive their birth and prerogatives." The *διντος* points the contrast to the imagined freedom of the Jews: comp. ver. 33. "My freedom," says Quesnel, "is that in me which is most slavish and base so long as Thou dost not set it free. The more Thou leavest it to itself, the less free will it be."

Ver. 37. "I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye

seek to kill Me, because My word hath no place in you."—The Jews, in ver. 33, based their assertion that they were a free people on the fact that they were Abraham's seed. If the premises had been true, then the conclusion would have been sound. To Abraham it was said, in Gen. xxii. 17, "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;" and also, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," Gen. xii. 3, xxii. 18, by which the whole of the rest of the world was placed in dependence on the seed of Abraham, and laid at their feet. The seed of Abraham is a kingdom of priests, in Ex. xix. 6. Of it Isa. lxi. 5, 6, speaks: "And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen, and your vine-dressers. But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves." They for whom such a dignified position is reserved in the future, must already in the present enjoy incomparable dignity. The error of the Jews lay, not in the high opinion which they had of the seed of Abraham, but in this, that they at once, and without any qualification, identified the lineal bodily descendants of Abraham with his seed. From this unspiritual view they ought to have been delivered by the history of the patriarch himself; for instance, in the example of Ishmael and Esau, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," Gen. xxi. 12. In order to true sonship of such a man as Abraham, more was required than the mere bodily descent; it was required that there should be a likeness to the father in that which was the centre of his being. Whosoever was unlike him in that, could not belong to his seed; whosoever was like him in that, was adopted into his seed;—even as in the Old Testament itself the way to this adoption was opened, and as the prophets announced that in future times it would be extended in the widest degree. Samuel, whom Eli, in 1 Sam. iii. 6, calls his son, was his son in a truer sense than his own degenerate children. "My father, my father!" cried Elisha to Elijah, in 2 Kings ii. 12. On the other side, Ezekiel, in ch. xvi. 3, makes the Amorites the fathers of the degenerate members of the covenant people. Zechariah, in ch. xiv. 21, speaks of the Canaanites in the house of the Lord. Isaiah, in ch. i. 10, calls the princes of Israel princes of Sodom, and the people of Israel the people of Go-

morrah, and thereby excludes them utterly from the people of the true seed of Abraham : comp. Jer. xxiii. 14. The degraded people of the covenant are, in Hos. xii. 8, termed Canaan. Jesus here admits to the Jews, that they were in a certain sense the descendants of Abraham ; but He draws from the position which they assumed towards Himself, the conclusion that they were not his children in the true sense, and in that which alone came then into consideration ; that they rather belonged to an altogether different father, whom He does not at once proceed to mention, in order to excite their suspense and attention. “The seed of Abraham My friend” (my lover), is the term given to the true Church of God in Isa. xli. 8. The love of God—not of God in the abstract, but of Him whose manifestation was in His Angel, who everywhere, from Gen. xvi. downwards, meets us in the history of the patriarchs—is here declared to have been the nature and mark of Abraham, which must be reflected in all his seed. Whosoever seeks to kill Christ, the Angel of the Lord manifest in the flesh, cannot be partaker of Abraham’s nature, and cannot belong to Abraham’s seed. That they sought to kill Christ, had its reason in this, that His word did not abide and have its operation in them. This has been explained in various ways : for instance, “Because My word finds no room among you.” The meaning which this gives is appropriate enough. Quesnel : “The word of God requires an empty heart. A heart full of earthly plans, of carnal interests, of ambition, of avarice, of worldly occupations, of love to creaturely enjoyments, and of things that profit not, is not adapted to receive the evangelical seed.” But this exposition cannot be grammatically justified. *Xωρεῖν* has, in classical usage, a double meaning : 1. that of going ; and 2. that of seizing. It occurs in the New Testament with both these significations, and with no other. The second does not yield here an appropriate sense ; but the first, on the other hand, appears strictly in harmony, especially if we take going in the sense of going forward, as in Aristophanes the words *χωρεῖ δὴ τὸ πρᾶγμα* are explained by the scholiast *προκόπτει τὸ ἔργον*. The going here, as also the running of 2 Thess. iii. 1, ὥν αὐτὸς τοῦ Κυρίου τρέχῃ, forms the contrast to standing idle or still. The word of Christ among the Jews had no progress. It encountered mighty hindrances, which altogether baffled its progress.

Ver. 38. "I speak that which I have seen with My Father ; and ye do (do ye) that which ye have seen with your father."—"Who does not shudder," says Quesnel, "when he contemplates these two, who are so entirely opposite, and have no medium—God or the devil? He who does not bring his life into conformity with the will of God is not His child ; he gives himself up to be carried forwards to the will of the devil, and chooses him as his father." The words, "that which ye have seen with your father," point back to the scenes of the Old Testament, in which Satan is presented to us most vividly in his shameful acts,—the history of the Fall, comp. ver. 44 ; the Prologue of the book of Job ; and the third chapter of Zechariah. The reading, *ἡκούσατε παρὰ τοῦ πατρός*, sprang from misapprehending this allusion. "The pronouns *μου* and *ὑμῶν*," remarks Meyer, with Lachmann and Tischendorf, following good authorities, "must be removed as clumsy distinctives." But this very distinction is necessary to the clearness and emphasis of the saying. The expression is made more rhetorically keen by the omission ; but this of itself must not be regarded as an advantage. The imperative *do ye* is parallel with the challenging *πληρώσατε* of Matt. xxiii. 32, and the *ποίησον* of John xiii. 27. Jesus will not hinder them in their work : if it is right to them, it is right to Him. While they do this, they act in such a manner as to bring God against them in His righteous judgment.

Vers. 39, 40, 41. "They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill Me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God : this did not Abraham. Ye do (do ye) the deeds of your father."—The answer of the Jews had for its design to provoke Jesus into a contradiction, and thus to find out whom He meant by the other father. But Jesus contents Himself, at first and preliminarily, by showing further that Abraham could not be their father. Yet in the end He all the more emphatically points to the fact that they have another father, and thus does not let go the thread out of His hand.—Jesus says, "If ye were the children of Abraham, ye would do the works of Abraham ;" and, "this did not Abraham." We may refer the contrast to the difference between Abraham's

piety generally, and their impiety. However, as Jesus does not speak of the latter generally, but of their wishing to kill Himself, it seems more proper to look in the history of Abraham for some event which furnishes a direct and specific contrast. And we are pointed at once to Gen. xviii., and the heartfelt joy with which Abraham received Jehovah or His angel, bowed himself towards the ground, and said, "My Lord, if now I have found favour in Thy sight, pass not away, I pray Thee, from Thy servant." We are all the rather required to refer to that occurrence, in which, as here, there was a human concealment of God, because Jesus in ver. 25 points to the identity between Himself and the Angel of the Lord. But all doubt is removed by ver. 56, where Jesus most expressly refers to that event.<sup>1</sup> "A man :" Jehovah and the two angels, who entered in unto Abraham in Gen. xviii. 16 (comp. Rom. v. 15; 1 Tim. ii. 5), are described as three *men*, on account of their appearance in human form.

Ver. 41. "Then said they to Him, We be not born of fornication ; we have one Father, even God."—Jesus had once more hinted to them that they had another father than Abraham. He could not mean another human father : He Himself had admitted that they sprang from the stock of Abraham. But if He had a superhuman father in view, He denied to them not only the sonship of Abraham, but the sonship of God also. Hence they maintained this against Him.—If God was not to be their Father, it was obvious to suppose that He meant the false gods, especially as in the prophets the apostate people are often termed a brood of idolatry. But they thought they might easily repel this objection against them ; and with perfect justice, because the external idolatry, which in the times of the prophets had been so great a danger, had long disappeared, and externally all depended now upon the true God. *Whoredom* is all impure commerce with idols. In the Old Testament it is sometimes exhibited as the genus, of which adultery is one species. In Judges xix. 2 we read, "And his concubine played the whore against him ;" and spiritual adultery is not seldom termed whoredom,—*e.g.* Ex. xxxiv.

<sup>1</sup> Lampe refers the words to the *familiares Abrahami cum Christo in forma humana apparente congressus, veneratione ac amore plenos, atque adeo a Judæorum facinore ut quam maxime abhorrentes.*

15, "And they go a-whoring after their gods;" Lev. xvii. 7, "Devils after whom they have gone a-whoring;" and Ezek. xx. 30, 31, "Commit ye whoredom after their abominations? Ye pollute yourselves with all your idols." The individuals who were infected with the national sin of whoredom or idolatry are represented as spiritual children proceeding from this impure connection. And this expression rests upon Old Testament grounds. In Isa. lvii. 3 we read, "But draw near hither, ye sons of the sorceress, the seed of the adulterer and of the whore." The sorceress and the whore of that passage are apostate Zion; the adulterer is idolatry, or the idol. The individuals infected with idolatry are represented as the children who have sprung from the impure commerce of Zion with false gods. The Lord says to Hosea, ch. i. 2, "Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms, and children of whoredoms." The wife, the congregation of Israel, is connected with the whoredom so far as she practised it, and the children so far as they sprang from it: comp. ch. ii. 6, 7. In Hos. v. 7 we read, "They have dealt treacherously against the Lord; for they have begotten strange children." The "one father" is opposed to the many fathers, which they would have if they were idolaters. In Jer. iii. 1, "Thou hast played the harlot with *many* lovers," we have the opposite to which "we have one Father, even God," refers: comp. Isa. lvii. 8, "where shameless Zion makes wide her bed," that she may receive many adulterers, and "all thy lovers," Ezek. xvi. 37; and "committed her whoredoms with all," etc., Ezek. xxiii. 7.—Jesus designedly led them on so far, that they name God as their Father. This gave Him the right ground for the declaration that the devil was their father. Bengel, on ver. 41: *Hujus nomen nondum exprimitur sed idem mox ut Judæi audent Deum appellare patrem suum, expresse appellatur, Diabolus.*

Ver. 42. "Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me."—God could not be the Father of the Jews. "For if we truly love God, we entertain reverence for all those who speak to us by His commission, and we honour Him in His servants" (Quesnel). It is not in vain that, in the first table of the decalogue, there is appended to the commandments which directly refer to our

conduct towards God, one which commands us to honour those who upon earth are invested with the likeness and reflection of His honour. The fulfilling of this commandment is the test of the fulfilling of those which precede it. He who does not honour those superior persons whom he sees, how shall he honour God whom he doth not see? At the head of all those who are the image or reflection of the glory of God, stands Jesus Christ. Whosoever does not love and honour Him with all his heart, shows thereby that his worship of God is a lie, and mere hypocrisy. *Locus hic diligenter notandus est, nullam esse pietatem, nullum timorem Dei ubi Christus rejicitur* (Calvin). “I came forth from God” points back to Micah v. 1, “And His *goings forth* were from everlasting, from the days of eternity,” where, in opposition to the human and lower origin of the Messiah, His Divine and higher outgoing is made prominent; the ἥκω, *I come*, which, apart from the Old Testament passage, has in it something strange and superfluous, points back to Mal. iii. 1, “The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly *come* to His temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, He cometh, saith the Lord of hosts.” The words which follow in our text, ἐκεῖνός με ἀπέστειλε, have their foundation in those words of Malachi concerning the Covenant Angel, the Messenger of God who is sent for the sake of the covenant.

Ver. 43. “Why do ye not understand My speech? even because ye cannot hear My word.”—Of hearing in the sense of understanding, see on ch. vi. 20. Their hearing was no better than not hearing, because it was only with the outward ear. Although λαλία and λόγος are lexically distinct, yet the one might just as well have been placed here in the stead of the other. It is only the variation of the expression, which caused the insertion in the second clause of λόγος, and of ἀκούειν instead of γινώσκειν. But it might have stood ὅτι οὐ δύνασθε γινώσκειν τὴν λαλίαν τὴν ἐμήν. The whole stress lies upon “ye *cannot*.” It is a token of the deepest degradation when a man can no longer understand the truth: comp. Jer. vi. 10, Sept. ἵδοὺ ἀπερίτητα τὰ ὡτα αὐτῶν καὶ οὐ δυνήσονται ἀκούειν; John xii. 39, where the not believing is traced to the not being *able* to believe; Rom. viii. 7; 1 Cor. ii. 14. “Heaven,” says Quesnel, “is a strange land for the children of this earth; and

the language of the mysteries is not intelligible to those who have only ears of flesh and blood." To men's fitness to apprehend the Divine truth, we may apply the saying, *obsta principiis*. The individual acts of voluntary rejection of the Divine word and suppression of good influences, result gradually in a condition of obduracy; the frightful condition—whether the case be an individual, or a whole age, or a nation—of one who has a perverted and disordered mind, and is unsusceptible of faith; the deafness and insensibility of the soul to higher truth. When a people have reached that point, they are on the threshold of judgment, as Isa. vi. shows, where, in ver. 9, such a condition as this is described: "And He said, Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not." Outwardly they should continue to hear the word of God; but there was a ban upon them that they could not understand it, and could not inwardly appropriate it to themselves. They *will* see, but they should not perceive.—It is, alas, not to be denied that the condition here described—that of incapacity to apprehend Divine truth—is manifested in many of its symptoms amongst ourselves; that there is no intelligence in many for the clearest and most simple unfolding of sound doctrine; that their minds are so corrupt (2 Tim. iii. 8) as to leave them unable to distinguish between right and left.—Jesus had shown, in ver. 42, that the Jews could not be children of God. And He now prepares the way for the mention of their true father, as we hear it in ver. 44, by this description of their sunken spiritual state, which forms "the ground for the frightful conclusion that they were of the devil" (Stier).

Ver. 44. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."—Jesus now names the father to whom the Jews truly belonged, in contradistinction to their pretended sonship to Abraham and to God. What is it to have the devil for a father? Of course, it is self-evident that the physical derivation is out of the question. Jesus had, in ver. 37, admitted that, as to bodily descent, the Jews were the seed of Abraham. The relation is a spiritual one, in which Satan is he originator of an influence which man receives, and by which

he is led. That we must not limit it to a mere similarity of disposition (Augustin: non nascendo sed imitando), but that real influences are included, is evident from the antithesis, "being of or from God." It is also clear from Matt. xv. 13, where the ungodly, specifically the Pharisees, are termed plants which the heavenly Father hath not planted, but the devil; Matt. xiii. 38, 39, where the enemy who sowed the tares is Satan, who is represented as being master of the minds of his own, just as Christ is of His, and who is the author of their wickedness; John xiii. 2, according to which Satan injected wicked designs into the heart of Judas; John xiii. 27, where Satan enters into the traitor; Rev. xvi. 13, where it is written, "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils which, working miracles, go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world." Thus influences proceed from Satan equally real with those which proceed from Christ. As with the children of God there is a seed, 1 John iii. 9, 10, so also there is with the children of the devil: ver. 9 of this passage might have its counterpart thus, "Whosoever is born of the devil committeth sin: for his seed remaineth in him; and he must sin, because he is born of Satan." Men are placed in the middle between the good spirits which proceed forth from Christ, and the evil spirits, which proceed forth from Satan.

The original passage which is the foundation of "Ye are of your father the devil," is Gen. iii. 15, where the wicked are denominated the seed of the serpent; the same passage to which the Lord referred in Matt. xiii. 39: ὁ δὲ ἐχθρὸς ὁ σπείρας αὐτὰ, ἔστιν ὁ διάβολος. The fact that Jesus presently afterwards makes express allusion to Gen. iii., removes all doubt upon this point.—The immediate result of the spiritual relation of the child to the father is a fellowship of inclinations with the begetter, the seed of whom remaineth in the begotten. "The lusts of your father ye will do :" this is more fully developed in what follows. "He was a murderer from the beginning ;" and they were seeking to kill Christ—to kill Him who brought to the whole human race life. He used lying in the service of his murder; and they were employing all the arts of lying to change the Son into a blasphemer of God, and to change themselves, in reality enemies

of God, into men zealous of the Divine honour.—“He was a murderer from the beginning.” There is an element of truth in the notion revived by Lücke, Nitzsch, and others, that when Satan is called a murderer from the beginning, there is allusion to the murderous act of Cain. This is evident from the comparison of 1 John iii. 12, 15, and Rev. xii. 3 (see my Commentary). And then the words, “Ye seek to kill Me,” in ver. 40, present a more direct parallel to Cain’s murder of his brother, than to the death which Satan brought upon our first parents; although it would be altogether wrong to argue that Satan, in the case of our first parents, only introduced a *spiritual* death, which does not enter into consideration here. For bodily death entered and passed upon the human race through the seduction of Satan: comp. Gen. ii. 17, iii. 19; Wisd. ii. 24; Rom. v. 12. But the reference to Cain’s murder must not be made the only one, or even the predominant one; rather than that, it must be altogether abandoned. His murder of his brother comes into view rather as one expression of the malignant principle which had been introduced into human nature through the first temptation; even as in Genesis that murder is considered as the fruit of the poisonous tree planted in ch. iii. It was the same spirit of murder which urged Satan to use the lie, “Ye shall not surely die,” in bringing men under the dominion of death, and which operated in Cain, and led him to destroy the life of his devout brother.

The exclusive reference to Cain’s murder is refuted by many considerations. 1. Satan’s murder of man is placed in the strictest connection with his *lie*. Now, there is no lie in the case of the first fratricide; whilst, in bringing men first under the power of sin, the means used was the lie which suggested better possessions to be gained, and cast suspicion upon God. The words of Jesus, viewed simply, point to an event in the beginning of man’s history which exhibited at once and together the spirit of murder and the spirit of lying. 2. The book of Genesis does not speak expressly of any co-operation of Satan in Cain’s act of murder. We have assurance of that co-operation only when we take that act in its internal connection with the earlier assault of Satan upon our first parents, when he was concealed behind the serpent. When our Lord is dealing with the Jews, He never propounds any secret doctrine. He always

appeals to facts which are plain and patent in Scripture. 3. "Ye are of your father the devil," is a sentence which points back to the seed of the serpent in Gen. iii. 15. 4. The "from the beginning" points also to an event which belongs to the first acts of human history, and in which the first parents of the human race were involved. Certainly, it cannot be conceived but that the event here referred to was the first in which the devil declared himself to be a destroyer of man. Everywhere else in the New Testament the words ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, τὴν ἀρχήν, κατ' ἀρχὰς, refer back to Gen. i.—iii.: comp. John i. 1, 2, viii. 25; 1 John i. 1, ii. 13; Matt. xix. 4, 8; Mark x. 6, xiii. 19; Heb. i. 10. Gen. iv., with its murderous event, may, in the manner we have indicated, be included. But the exclusive reference to that event would be altogether without analogy. 5. Jesus says that Satan stood not in the truth, moved not in it as his element, because there was no truth in him. This points to a notorious event in which Satan laid bare his truthless nature. But it is only in the history of the fall that we find such an event. 6. Jesus does not only call Satan a liar, but He also designates him the father of liars. But Satan could bear that designation only with allusion to that one scripturally attested lie of his which preceded all other lies upon earth. That was the lie of Gen. iii. 4, 5. To "and the father of it," corresponds "in the beginning."

"And he abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him."—The ancient interpretation, which referred the words ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὐχ ἔστηκεν to the fall of Satan, 2 Pet. ii. 4, Jude 6, has been very properly abandoned. For, first of all, Ernesti's remark is decisive, that ἔστηκα means only "I have taken my stand, I stand." This signification is the only one which the Perfect bears, either in New Testament or in classical usage. And then, secondly, it is evident that the reason assigned in the latter clause does not suit the reference of the former clause to Satan's fall. For that reason points to the lying conduct of Satan, who had already fallen. He stands not in the truth, maintains not himself in its domain, falls out of it when he opens his mouth, because there is no truth in him; the truthlessness of his nature has the truthlessness of his conduct as its result. If it is said that the ὅτι is here not to be understood ætiologically, but syllogistically, we have only to allege in answer

the manifestly parallel ætiological *ὅτι* in the following clause. The counterpart of “not standing in the truth” is the “speaking a lie;” and, with “there is no truth in him,” corresponds “he speaketh of his own.” The general proposition, that Satan stands not in the truth, has its authentication in the special lie of his, which is recorded in the history of the fall; and it was uttered with direct reference to that lie. Anton excellently gives the reason of the characteristics of Satan’s and his children’s lying: “Evil cannot accomplish anything without the semblance of good.”—In the words, “for he is liar (not a liar), and the father of the same,” *ψεύστης* is the generic idea. The *αὐτοῦ* refers to *ψεύστης*, not to the more distant *ψεῦδος*; as is shown by its correspondence with the beginning, “Ye are of your father the devil;” as also by “I shall be a liar like unto you,” in ver. 55. If we refer *αὐτοῦ* to the *ψεῦδος*, the point is at once broken. The Scripture gives a more profound idea of the *lie* than the natural man, in his superficial psychology, apprehends. It perceives a lie in many things, where the world only perceives honest conviction. Views and opinions which have been formed under the influence of lust and passion, do not cease to belong to the category of the *mendacium voluntarium*, although the liars themselves have no distinct consciousness that they are lying. But in the case of our text we must hold fast the idea of the voluntary lie. The lie of Satan, which the Lord had in view, was altogether and absolutely voluntary; and the lie of the Jews, who declared Jesus to be a Samaritan, or a demoniac, or a blasphemer, is everywhere exhibited as based upon views constructed in the interest of their lusts and passions. Otherwise, they would not have been given up to destruction on account of that lie.

Ver. 45. “And because I tell you the truth, ye believe Me not.”—And in this they plainly declared themselves to be the genuine sons of the father of liars. He does not say, “*although*,” but “*because I speak the truth*.” Whosoever on that account denies faith, must be altogether under the sway of the spirit of lying.

Ver. 46. “Which of you convinceth Me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe Me?”—The Jews might have rejoined, that Jesus did not speak the truth. But in the presence of so many great and glorious demonstrations of the

divinity of His mission, they could base such an assertion only on the fact, that they could point out flaws in His character and conversation. If they could do this, then Jesus would urge no further claim upon their faith. For the truth of His great utterance demanded stainless holiness; inasmuch as the utterer of the truth is at the same time its objective centre. With Jesus it was quite otherwise than with the earlier organs of revelation, for these latter always declared themselves to be poor sinners. Moses, in Num. xii. 3, avows that no man could think more lightly of him than himself did. He records, without scruple, his own weaknesses and sins; *e.g.* that, in mere submission to his wife, he neglected the circumcision of his son, and that he was excluded from the land of promise as a punishment for his weak faith. But Jesus represented Himself as the light of the world, the Son of God, and the Jehovah of the Old Covenant manifest in the flesh. In that case, any the slightest moral stain would have been an impeachment of the truth of His pretension. It might seem to the Jews that they could prove against Him a violation of the Sabbath commandment. But such sins only were in question here as lay beyond the region of the controversial questions pending between Jesus and the Jews. According to the principles of the Jews themselves, and their own presupposition, the violation of the Sabbath ceased when Jesus was acknowledged as the Son of God; for the Son of God has, as such, power over the Sabbath. The absolute sinlessness of Jesus is not directly contained in the sentence we now consider—for there may be sin which cannot be proved against him who does it; but it is so indirectly—for Jesus could not have put such a question if He had not been conscious of absolute freedom from sin. De Wette rightly remarks: “It is a question of undeceiving self-consciousness, which has no contradiction to fear.” Thus the other passages of the New Testament are parallel, which attribute to our Lord that absolute sinlessness which never has been found since the fall within the domain of human nature; and which, as it was the immediate effect of His Divinity, so it was the proof of it: 1 John iii. 5; 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Pet. i. 19, ii. 22. In the Old Testament, the absolute righteousness of Christ is represented as the foundation of His redeeming work. We read in Isa. liii. 11: “By His knowledge shall my righteous Servant

justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities." By the prominence given to צדיק, and by its immediate junction with הצדיק, it was intended to show the strict connection which subsists between the righteousness of the Servant of God—who, although perfectly sinless, ver. 9, nevertheless bore the punishment of sin—and the justification which is communicated through Him.

Ver. 47. "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God."—Jesus here answers the question which He Himself had thrown out in ver. 46. The counterpart of "not being of God" is "being of Satan." Thus the proof is introduced of the statement, "Ye are of your father the devil," and specially for the allegation that they belonged to Satan, as the father of all liars. Examples of being from God were given by Simeon, Anna, John the Baptist, the Apostles: comp. on ch. iii. 21. Those who were of God must of course be found within the limits of the covenant people, among whom the Lord, by His Spirit, is present.

Ver. 48. "Then answered the Jews, and said to Him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?"—The Samaritans are here regarded as unsound in faith, or heretics. And the heresy of Jesus they found in the fact that He, although a man, made Himself God, ch. x. 33. "Thou hast a devil," or evil spirit (comp. ch. vii. 20), refers to the enthusiastic manner in which He proclaimed His delusion. Similar charges had been alleged by the ungodly against the prophets of the Old Testament. In 2 Kings ix. 11, the servants of his lord said to Jehu, when a prophet had been with him, "Wherefore came this *mad fellow* to thee?" "Every man that is mad, and maketh himself a prophet," is the style in which a false prophet writes concerning the true.

Vers. 49, 50. "Jesus answered, I have not a devil: but I honour My Father, and ye do dishonour Me. And I seek not Mine own glory: there is One that seeketh and judgeth."—"How graciously and tenderly," says Heumann, "does the Lord instruct the Jews who blasphemed Him, if peradventure they might by any means be won!" That which the Jews objected against Christ was unfounded. The seemingly eccentric in His nature was His zeal for the honour of God, which must suffer if the manifestation of the Father was not acknowledged in Jesus.

To be indifferent here, to yield now to His enemies, would have been to surrender God's honour to contempt. But, on the other hand, the Jews are smitten by the *righteous* judgment that they dishonour the Son of God. That protest they could not evade. The essential point in it is in the second clause, the *ζητῶν*. It points back to Deut. xviii. 19 : "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which He shall speak in My name, I will *require it* (or seek it) of him,"—the same passage to which Jesus more than once elsewhere refers, comp. on ch. v. 46. Peter, in Acts iii. 22, 23, quotes it expressly.

Ver. 51. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death."—Berl. Bible : "Here one might ask how it was that He uttered such an exclamation as this after such severe words. The answer is, that we see here what His proper work is. Judging and punishing is a strange work. From it He turns away again to that which is not a strange work, preaching His Gospel." Jesus would attract them by showing what they would gain by giving up their perverse position ; and at the same time warns them of what they would lose if they persisted in their unhappy state. The question was one of life and death, and for their own sakes they should earnestly think of it. Jesus declares most impressively that with Him, and only with Him, life was to be found ; so that whosoever despised Him, would inevitably sink into death. The *keeping* of Christ's words stands in contrast with the thoughtless *forgetting* of Jas. i. 25 ; and there is manifest allusion to the standing Old Testament formula of keeping the word, commandments, ordinances, or law of *Jehovah*, on which all salvation and prosperity were made to depend : Ex. xv. 26, xx. 6 ; Lev. xix. 37 ; Eccles. viii. 2. "Shall not see death" points to Ps. lxxxix. 49, "What man is he that liveth and shall not see death ? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave ?" The question of that verse finds its answer in Christ, and only in Him. He has abolished death, and brought to light life and immortality, 2 Tim. i. 10. Death, which is now the gate of life, is no longer to be called death : comp. ch. xi. 25. Augustin : Quid est mors ? relictio corporis, depositio sarcinæ gravis : sed si alia sarcina non portetur, qua homo in gehennas præcipitetur.

Vers. 52, 53. “Then said the Jews unto Him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets ; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead ? and the prophets are dead : whom makest thou thyself ?”—The Jews at once understood Him to mean merely bodily death. Moreover, they rightly took it for granted that Jesus, if He could promise His disciples freedom from death, must avow Himself to be absolutely exalted above dying ; and thereby He elevated Himself above Abraham and the prophets, who all were subjected to death.

Vers. 54, 55. “Jesus answered, If I honour Myself, My honour is nothing : it is My Father that honoureth Me ; of whom ye say, that He is your God. Yet ye have not known Him ; but I know Him : and if I should say, I know Him not, I shall be a liar like unto you : but I know Him, and keep His saying.”—The meaning of the words, “If I honour,” etc., is this : It will one day come to light that Christ is the Son of God ; as the Father hath till now borne witness for His Son, so will He also in the time to come. How the Father glorifies His Son, they would one day in their own ruin find out. The God whom they arrogated to themselves, and whom they denied to Christ, would one day utter so loudly His “This is My beloved Son,” and “Depart from Me, ye evil-doers,” that their ears should be amazed. The *δοξάζων με* may be best referred both to the glorification visible to their eyes, comp. ch. v. 36, x. 25, xi. 4, and to the future glorification, ch. viii. 21, 25, vii. 39, xii. 26, xiii. 31,—the exaltation of Christ to the right hand of the Father, as the almighty Ruler over all His enemies. The glorification of Christ by the Father went on unceasingly ; but the blind had no eyes to discern it. In this there was a new application of the words of Moses in Deut. xxix. 3, after he had spoken of the wonders and signs of the Lord in Egypt : “Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.”

Ver. 56. “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day : and he saw it, and was glad.”—Jesus now approaches more closely the question of the Jews, “Art thou greater than our father Abraham ?” He points to an early historical fact, in which His own superiority to Abraham was *confirmed*. “Your

father”—thus does the Lord name Abraham, to shame the Jews, who were so perfectly unlike him spiritually whom they could call their bodily father—“Abraham rejoiced that he saw My day.” There can be no doubt that these words indicate the heartfelt and joyful longing of Abraham to see this day; so that Bengel rightly explains it: *Gestivit cum desiderio.* Ἀγαλλιάομαι, indeed, means only rejoicing; but the idea of longing is imparted to it by its connection with ἵνα. These words describe Abraham’s hearty desire and longing for the revelation of the day of Christ; and those which follow describe the gratification of that longing. Bengel: *Hæc exaltatio præcessit visionem: et visionem comitabatur iterum χαρά.*—“And he saw it, and was glad.” We must not here admit such explanations as that of Lücke, borrowed from Lampe: “Abraham in the heavenly life, as a blessed spirit with God, saw the day of the Lord, and rejoiced from heaven to see its fulfilment on earth.” For Jesus was wont to deal with the Jews out of *Scripture*; and cannot be supposed to refer here to a supposed fact which He could not establish by its authority. And the answer of the Jews in ver. 57 is against it; for that proceeds from the pre-supposition, admitted by Christ to be right, that the question was of an ancient historical intercourse between Abraham and Christ. Christ, in ver. 58, sets aside the argument of His not being yet fifty years old. Lücke testifies against his own view, when he is obliged, in accommodation to it, to speak of “the foolish question of the opponents.”

In my Christology (vol. i. Clark’s Trans.) these words were referred to the crisis when Abraham—as yet only Abram—received the promise, that “in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Behind Jehovah, who gave this promise, Jesus lay hid. The blessing of Jehovah for all the families of the earth was the day of Jehovah and of Christ—the day of His glorification upon earth. Abraham saw that day in spirit, when he received the promise. But the matter becomes still more simple, if we assume that Jesus referred to the manifestation of Jehovah to Abraham in Gen xviii. In ch. xii. 1, there is no manifestation of Jehovah spoken of, there is no seeing and being seen, but only, “And the Lord said unto Abram.” On the other hand, in ch. xviii. 1, we read amongst the first words, “And the Lord appeared unto him,” properly “was

seen ;” and, in ver. 2, “ And he lifted up his eyes and looked.” The reference to Gen. xii. 3 fails to give any demonstration of the longing desire of Abraham to see the Lord, as well as of his joy after he had obtained that sight. But the reference to ch. xviii. gives it abundantly. It is seen in the whole deportment of Abraham, which showed that he had partaken of a blessedness long desired, especially in the words, “ My Lord, if now I have found favour in Thine eyes, pass not away, I pray Thee, from Thy servant.” Gen. xii. 3 does not give any simple and clear view of the day of the Lord ; but in Gen. xviii. the day is that of His appearance, which stamped that day with a characteristic which distinguished it from all other days in the life of Abraham. That “ My day ” was substantially the same as “ Me,” is shown by the sense in which the Jews understood it, and which the Lord did not deny to be the right one ; for they regarded Jesus as having declared that Abraham had seen Him, and that He had seen Abraham. The demonstration that in Gen. xviii. the Angel of the Lord, the Logos, appeared in company with two lower angels, has been given by me in the Christology (vol. i.). Jesus had already intimated His personal identity with the Angel of the Lord, first in ver. 25, and then again in vers. 39, 40. Ver. 58 would have no meaning if the allusion to Gen. xviii. were denied ; and Jesus had already referred to it in vers. 39, 40, a passage which is inseparably bound up with the present.

Ver. 57. “ Then said the Jews unto Him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham ?”—The Jews well knew that Jesus was not so old ; but they would show themselves unprejudiced in a matter about which a few lustrums more or less were of little importance. But there was also in this something like mockery. Lyser: Ultro annos aliquot addunt, ut sic tanto plus absurditatem dicti ipsius evincant. They name just fifty years, because that was the half of a century. Against the idea that Jesus was prematurely old, Bengel observes : Non est credibile Jesum propter angores præmaturam senectutis speciem contraxisse. Moses was a man sorely tried ; and yet we read of him, in Deut. xxxiv. 7, “ His eye was not dim, neither his natural force abated.”

Ver. 58. “ Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”—If the Jews had misunder-

stood the Lord, His answer would not have been appropriate ; for that answer ought to explain how it was that Jesus could have seen Abraham, although as the Son of man He was not yet fifty years old. The solemn preface of affirmation here marked that a truth was conceived of the most penetrating importance. Anton : "Peradventure this affirmation might make them ponder earnestly, ne ludant in re tam seria." It is as clear as can be, that the question is here of a real and personal pre-existence ; not of a pre-existence in the purposes of God, which could not by any means be a specific prerogative of Christ. A personal pre-existence is required by the fact, that the Lord here specifically refers to and answers the objection of the Jews ;<sup>1</sup> by the whole series of what the book of Genesis records concerning the manifestations of the Angel of the Lord in the primitive time ; and by the analogy of ch. i. 1, 15. It is evident that there is much significance in the use of the two different words which signify *being*. The existence of Abraham, as of all men, belongs to the region of the *becoming*, *werden* ; while Christ has *being* which is supremely exalted above all becoming. Lyser : Quantum discriminem est inter creatorem et creaturam, tantum inter Christum et Abrahamum. There is also a deep meaning in the "I am," not "I was." It points to that absolute Being which is not subject to any change, the prerogative of the Godhead alone. Analogous is the language of Ps. xc. 2, Sept. πρὸ τοῦ ὅρη γεννηθῆναι σὺ εἶ. There is allusion, doubtless, to the name Jehovah, Jahve, *He that is what He is.*<sup>2</sup> The ἐγώ εἰμι points specifically to the יהוה, which the God of Israel in Ex. iii. 14 utters.

Ver. 59. "Then took they up stones to cast at Him ; but Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by."—The Jews understood Christ better than many immature and ill-instructed Christians, who substitute for the real pre-existence of Christ an ideal pre-existence in the counsels of God, which was common to Him and all mortals. They applied to the case, Lev. xxiv. 16,

<sup>1</sup> Lampe : Judæi de personali præ-existentia Domini quæsiverant, ad quam questionem Jesum non ironice sed serio respondisse vel ex præfixo juramento liquet.

<sup>2</sup> Calvin : Neque enim dicit : eram vel fui, sed ego sum, quo æqualitem et ab initio ad finem usque mundi eundum statum significat.

“And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him.” From the species of cursing they rose, by a perfectly justifiable theological exposition, to the genus of desecrating the name of God. And of this Christ was guilty, in their estimation, because He had ascribed to Himself participation in the Divine nature: comp. ch. x. 33, “For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.” The Jews perceived that they must make their election between worshipping and stoning. Their choosing the latter was more true and sincere than a characterless middle position.

“Jesus hid Himself” is generic; “He went out of the temple” shows how He accomplished it. According to the parallel of ch. xii. 36, *ταῦτα ἐλάλησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς, καὶ ἀπελθὼν ἐκρύβη ἀπ’ αὐτῶν*, the *καὶ ἐξῆλθε* is equivalent to *ἐξελθών*. De Dieu rightly compares Job xxix. 8, “The young men saw me, and hid themselves; and the aged arose, and stood up,” where hiding themselves is equivalent to leaving the room. We may also compare Dan. x. 7, where it is said of Daniel’s companions, when he received the vision, “and they fled and hid themselves,” *בַּהֲרֵב*; Mich.: *Ita ut absconderent se.* The hiding was there the fleeing. We must not think of any miracle in this matter. The dignity of our Lord’s demeanour was ethical here. “The retreat of Jesus Christ,” says Quesnel, “was humble, prudent, and instructive. He did not refuse to die for the proof of His divinity; He was soon afterwards a martyr in attestation of it; but He reserved Himself for a more shameful and a more cruel punishment, waiting for the time marked out of the Father, to make His death a sacrifice of obedience.”—The last clause is an addition to the text as originally current; and its origin was well accounted for by Beza. The words *διελθὼν διὰ μέσου αὐτῶν* are from Luke iv. 30. The *καὶ παρῆγεν οὗτος* was a gloss of the transcriber, who formed it with reference to the *καὶ παράγων* of the beginning of the next section.

## CHAP. IX. 1-X. 21.

## THE HEALING OF THE MAN BORN BLIND.

Parallel with the three manifestations of glory in Galilee, John reports three manifestations in Judea. That which now lies before us takes the second place among them, the first having been narrated in ch. v. The third is the resurrection of Lazarus. Each of these manifestations represents an entire class: the first, the *χωλοὶ περιπατοῦσι* (the lame walk); the second, the *τυφλοὶ ἀναβλέπονται* (the blind see); the third, the *νεκροὶ ἐγείρονται* (the dead are raised up), of Matt. xi. 5; and there is a progress discernible from the lower to the higher.

The section opens with the narrative of the fact itself, the miraculous healing of the man that had been born blind, in ch. ix. 1-7. Then follows, vers. 8-34, the record of the plots to which this fact gave rise among the Jews. The design of the Evangelist, in his elaborate development of all their schemes, was to show how by their means the fact itself was placed beyond all doubt or suspicion, and how the enemies of Christ were obliged, by their very efforts to obscure His glory, to set that glory in a still more glorious light. To the physical healing of the man born blind, there is appended in ch. ix. 35-37 his spiritual healing; viz. his being quickened into faith by means of Christ, *πτωχοὶ εὐαγγελίζονται*, Matt. xi. 5. A challenging utterance of Christ concerning this spiritual healing excited a conflict between Him and the Pharisees; a conflict which first was concerned with spiritual blindness, vers. 40, 41, and then gave Christ occasion to develop His whole relation with the Pharisees, as it was illustrated by the great fact before them, ch. x. 1-18. Then follows, finally, a record of the division which arose among the Jews in consequence of this saying of Christ, and of the fruit which His great miracle bore on one portion of the multitude, vers. 19-21. The section is declared to be one whole, complete in itself, by the fact that its last words, ch. x. 21, refer to the healing of the blind, with which it began; so that the end of it returns back into its beginning.

That John did not record this miracle merely because of the discourses connected with it, but that rather it had an inde-

pendent interest of its own in his eye (comp. on ch. vi. 1), is abundantly proved by the minute particularity with which he has communicated the dealings of the Jews in relation to it. In this he could have had no other aim than to place the miraculous fact beyond all doubt. His object was not “to delineate the growing hatred of the enemies of Jesus;” this is manifest from ch. ix. 3–12. Those who there first began the investigation are not to be classed amongst the “enemies of Jesus.” The whole record teaches us that the reason why John does not give so many detailed miraculous narratives as his three predecessors, was not that he attached a less importance to them,—a notion in itself inconceivable, when we remember that in none of the Gospels does Christ so expressly and repeatedly appeal to His miracles as in John’s,—but rather because he found that the three earlier Evangelists had abundantly provided for the preservation of the miracles. It was not his purpose to render them superfluous, but only to supplement them. But the series of detailed miraculous narratives which he also gives, serve as representatives of their kinds, and direct us to look in the first Evangelists for their completion.

Ver. 1. “And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth.”—*Παράγειν* may mean either going farther or passing by. According to the first acceptation, the event about to be recorded is closely connected with the occurrence of the former section; according to the second, its chronological relation is left undefined. We decide in favour of the latter. *Παράγειν*, with the signification of going farther, occurs elsewhere only in combination with *ἐκεῖθεν*, Matt. ix. 9, 27. This addition intimated, what otherwise the word would not have said, that it must not be taken in the usual sense of *passing by*: comp. Luke xviii. 37, where, instead of *ὅτι Ἰησοῦς παράγει*, in Matt. xx. 30, stands *ὅτι Ἰησοῦς παρέρχεται*. If we take *παράγειν* in the signification of going farther, then two great conflicts with the Pharisees follow in direct succession. The Evangelist describes in ch. viii.–x. 21 what took place during the whole interval between the Feast of Tabernacles and the Feast of Dedication. John selects and makes prominent three scenes belonging to this period, in which the glory of Jesus was manifested, which were of special significance in regard to His relations with the Jews, and on occasion of which

He uttered sayings of most comprehensive importance for His Church : the first in ch. viii. 12-29 ; the second in ch. viii. 31-59 ; and the third in our present section. It is not probable that the second and the third of these scenes bordered so closely on each other, without any resting-point between them. There is no force in the objection, that *παράγειν* must be a superfluous word, if it bears the meaning of passing by. It points to the fact, that Jesus did not seek an opportunity for the miracle, but that it presented itself to Him unsought. Nor must the *and* be pressed into the service of a close connection with what precedes. It is enough to refer to the junction by *and* between the body of the Gospel and the prologue, ch. i. 19. The *and* only establishes generally the internal relation between the fact recorded in this section and the fact recorded in the preceding. Matt. iv. 18 is very similar to this transition : *περιπατῶν δὲ παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν τῆς Γαλιλαίας, εἰδεὶ δύο ἀδελφούς.* And, as there we must explain, when Jesus once was walking, so here also ; and in the same period between the Feast of Tabernacles and the Feast of Dedication, Jesus passing by saw the blind man, as in ver. 8, described as a beggar. He probably sat in the spot where beggars were accustomed to resort—the neighbourhood of the Temple. That he had been born blind, was doubtless a notorious fact. He, a well-known person, might have perpetually announced it himself, in order to excite compassion amongst those who passed by.—That Jesus *saw* the blind man, was made known probably by His looking at him ; for, otherwise, the seeing would not be a known fact. He looked at him with a loving and significant glance ; and by that means the attention of the disciples was directed to him.

Ver. 2. “And His disciples asked Him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind ?”—It is an undeniable fact, that severe sicknesses are not seldom the consequences of great sins. Experience testifies it ; and in the threatenings of God’s law against daring transgressors, sicknesses are expressly mentioned amongst many other evils : Deut. xxviii. 22 ; Lev. xxvi. 16. This is the basis of fact for the widely extended notion that *all* severe sicknesses, and generally all heavy afflictions, are the result of special and extraordinary transgressions. This current and popular opinion—which cannot but mislead to uncharitable judgment upon the

sufferer, and Pharisaic self-complacency—we find the Pharisees arguing from as a settled axiom, ver. 34. In the book of Job it is represented by a trio of persons, in age and rank the chief figures round Job; whilst behind them the youthful Elihu, the representative of a new development of wisdom, introduces a better interpretation of evil. This book condemned that notion for ever; but it is not given to every man to penetrate its meaning and spirit; and thus the fallacy which it contends against has ever anew sprung up. It commends itself to low and common spirits by its simplicity and palpableness; it has the advantage of rendering it unnecessary to weep with those that weep; it saves a man from the obligation, when he looks at heavy affliction, of smiting on his breast and saying, “God be merciful to me a sinner;” it gives the natural man the comfortable feeling that he is so much better than the sufferer, as he is more fortunate. The disciples themselves could not disentangle themselves from this notion, to which they here give expression, just as Acts xxviii. 4 represents the current view in the heathen world. Yet their question here shows that the feeling of its unsoundness was stirring in their minds.

The disciples did not ask about sin generally, but about that sin in particular which, in its nature, would draw after it such and so fearful a punishment. Jesus was expected not only to say who had sinned, but also, when He had decided for the one or the other, to solve those apparently insuperable difficulties which the solution itself would encounter. Probably they were not without a secret presentiment that there was a third solution; but as yet they speak only after the current notion. That third explanation of the problem could not be entertained without impeaching the Divine righteousness; and the piety of the disciples was too living and pure to allow them to admire the thought of “a simply natural side of evil”—a hypothesis which would place nature by the side of God as a second and independent power. Yet the first and second explanations were surrounded by many and great difficulties. The man born blind could not himself be chargeable as the cause of his own misery; for if he had been born in sin and shapen in iniquity, yet this was common to all mankind, and could not justify a punishment so enormous in his case, and so far exceeding the ordinary limits of mortal punishment. Nor was the sin of his

parents sufficient to account for so great a calamity. It is the all-pervading doctrine of Scripture, that no man is punished unless himself guilty; and that only ungodly sons are involved in the doom of their parents. (Comp. Beiträge, Th. 3, s. 545.) Where there is a notorious transmission of bodily evil from parents to children, that transmission must be looked at from a quite different point of view: it must not be regarded as the punishment of guiltless children for the sin of their parents. The saying of Ex. xx. 5, "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children," is falsely interpreted when it is made to declare the punishment of innocent children on account of their parents' guilt. There, children are spoken of who are like their parents. Onkelos was right in adding, quando per-gunt filii in peccando pone parentes. There are two great classes exhibited: that of the ungodly, in whom the curse works onwards; and that of the pious, in whom the blessing works inwards. But this man born blind was generally known to be one who feared God. It is said in Deut. xxiv. 16, "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers; every man shall be put to death for his own sin." It is true that this passage treats primarily of the rule which the Jewish magistracy were to observe, and not of the rule which God observes. But if Ex. xx. 5 is made to refer to a common suffering of even guiltless sons, then the ministers of God would be obliged, in executing vengeance upon evil-doers, to include the children in the punishment. But, on the other hand, if Ex. xx. 5 refers only to those sons who are connected with their fathers in the fellowship of guilt, then there must be a distinction between the heavenly and the earthly judge, and the latter must not involve the sons in the punishment of their fathers. For God alone is the "Trier of the hearts and reins;" God alone knoweth with certainty whether or not the root of sin is thriving in the children. After all that has been said, in the background of the disciples' minds the question rose, And if neither of these sinned, how is the problem to be solved?

Ver. 3. "Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, but (he was born blind) that the works of God should be made manifest in him."—The question here was obviously concerning such a sin as was the direct cause of this

suffering. Augustin: *Si ergo et parentes ejus habuerunt peccatum et iste habuit peccatum, quare dominus dixit: neque hic peccavit neque parentes ejus, nisi ad rem, de qua interrogatus erat, ut cæcus nasceretur?* Sinfulness is the general lot of mankind. “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one,” is the language of Job xiv. 4. All suffering presupposes this common sin. It is not enough (with Anton) to refer to the “supreme dominion of God, who has power to use any man for any end of His own, being the absolute ruler; and therefore every creature is bound to yield himself up to that absolute ruler’s end.” An absolutely holy being could not possibly be elected to this end, that the works of God might be manifested in him. The *Theodicée* in relation to sufferings rests upon this, that all suffering must be first of all regarded as punishment, although we must not limit ourselves to this one-sided view alone. The Lord Himself declares, ch. v. 14, Luke v. 20, that all sickness in particular stands in a direct connection with sin. All sicknesses are punishments of sin, our Lord teaches in ch. v. 14. The Old Testament teaches us, and so does experience, that many severe sicknesses are the punishment of heavy sins. What is here taught is, that severe sicknesses and trials are not necessarily the results of specific transgression; so that we cannot absolutely and unconditionally argue from the calamity to the guilt. Man by his sinfulness has deserved every affliction; but in the distribution of sufferings other motives are in operation than the Divine retributive justice. Oftentimes those who are relatively the best, are visited with the severest dispensations of trial; so that the conclusion from the specific suffering to the specific guilt is always unjustifiable.

The works of God in ver. 4 are not the works “which God has commanded,” but the works which God doeth. According to Gen. i. 2, 3, Ps. civ. 24, the expression must be pre-eminently referred to the works of creation. These works of God, which were once displayed in the creation, and are still going on in the preservation of all things, are here to become manifest anew: the whole body of those works are to be exhibited in this one particular example of miraculous healing. The man born blind could be cured only by a repetition of the creating energy of God. And parallel with this reference to the creating

works of God, there follows the reference to Gen. ii. 7 in ver. 6. The works of God are also works of Christ. The intimate and perfect connection between the Creator and the Redeemer is exhibited in ch. i. 3 and viii. 25, according to which Christ was the agent also in the creation of the world. God's works were to be exhibited not only in the bodily healing of the blind man, but also in the spiritual healing that followed. The former paved the way for the latter in the Divine purpose: comp. ver. 39. It was the spiritual cure that first shed the true light upon the infliction of bodily blindness. If the man born blind had not been tried with this calamity, he would probably not have been one of the "not seeing" in ver. 39; he would have been involved in the mazes of Pharisaic misconception, and might have been brought by Christ's appearance not to sight, but to deeper blindness. Thus the punishment inflicted upon him, born in sin, by the Divine righteousness, was at the same time the greatest blessing, and the highest manifestation of the love of his God. It made it easier for him to abide in his simplicity, and to become a "babe," the necessary condition of participation with Christ.

Vers. 4, 5. "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."—Our Lord, while He prepared Himself to manifest the works of God in the blind man, and to approve on him the same power which once said, "Let there be light, and there was light," refers here to the motive which dictated His act, and by the same saying gives His disciples an exhortation to redeem, with all diligence and all zeal, the time appointed for their own earthly labours. In ver. 4 there is an undeniable allusion to Eccles. ix. 10: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." "The duty of doing all that it is in any way possible to do, is based, in the second part of the verse, on the consideration that what is here left undone never is done; that the tasks appointed by God for this life, which are here unaccomplished, remain unaccomplished; and that the gifts and powers lent for this life should be used in this life" (Comm. on Ecclesiastes, p. 216, Clark's Transl.) The "work" stands first in this original passage. Its applica-

bility, even to Christ Himself, appears obvious, when we observe that He, when He says, "I must work," has His own personality in view, and speaks of Himself in His actual life. What Christ did not do of the work of His earthly life, of His duty as the Redeemer, manifested in the form of a servant, and made in all things like unto us, could not afterwards be repaired. The night here corresponds in the original to Sheol. Accordingly, it appears to be no other than the night of death, towards which Christ was travelling with hasty steps. In harmony with this, the day would be the time of His stay upon earth. This also is confirmed by ver. 5, according to which the day is the time during which Jesus was in the world. Because the day is destined for labour,—comp. Ps. civ. 22, 23, "The sun ariseth; . . . Man goeth forth unto his work, and to his labour, until the evening,"—it is appropriate as marking the time for earthly work and business. But our present passage must not be viewed apart from ch. xi. 9, 10, where the day is the time of happiness and unhindered work, and the night is the time of passion and suffering. And here also, therefore, we must take a broader view of the night; not making it begin with the moment of death, but with the entrance of the season of suffering, which ended all active work; when the vocation is no longer to do, but to suffer, the will of God. This also better accords with other passages of John, in which the night occurs with a symbolical signification: comp. on ch. xi. 9, 10. The hortatory tendency of the words is evident from the reference to the original passage in Ecclesiastes. (Bengel: *Johannes sæpe describit Christum de rebus suis ita loquentem indefinite, uti convenit in quemvis pium in talibus rebus, c. xi. 9, xii. 24, 25.*) This shows that nothing is spoken of here that is specifically peculiar to Christ. Instead of *ἐμέ*, many MSS. read *ἡμᾶς*. This reading is not sufficiently supported; but it arose from the correct view, that underneath what Jesus said concerning Himself there was latent an exhortation to the Apostles. On the other hand, some have referred the words only to the disciples, misled by the difficulty which the saying presents when applied to Christ, and forgetting that He is here speaking in His proper and peculiar character as manifested in the form of a servant. This must be kept in view also in ver. 5. Christ, who is with His own always unto the end of the world, who reveals Himself

to them, and dwells within them, is, even after His glorification, the light of the world. But that does not come here into consideration. Our text speaks only of the Christ who was found in the form of a man. "*Οταν*, in the sense of "during the time when." The light is healing and salvation: comp. on ch. viii. 12. And it was here peculiarly appropriate, inasmuch as in the case which gave occasion to this general utterance, misery appeared in the form of blindness, both bodily and spiritual, ver. 39. The practical conclusion was, "And therefore I may not be weary of sending forth the beams of My light." In these words, too, there is an analogous joint reference to the servants of Christ: this is evident from "Ye are the light of the world," in Matt. v. 14. That itself contained the strongest injunction to let their light shine so long as they were in the world.

Ver. 6. "When He had thus spoken, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle: He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay."—The blind man, doubtless, knew that it was Jesus with whom he had to do, and that this Jesus had already miraculously healed many, else he would not have suffered the clay to be put on his eyes, or have followed the direction to go to the pool of Siloam, without uttering some objection like that which Naaman, 2 Kings v. 11, expressed under similar circumstances. In ver. 11 he answers the question, How were thine eyes opened? by saying, that a man called Jesus had made clay, etc. Doubtless the bystanders were very diligent in setting him right. The spitting occurs elsewhere in connection with other healing acts of Jesus, Mark vii. 33, viii. 23. It signified, just like the touching of Matt. xx. 34, and the placing the finger in the ear, Mark vii. 33, the going forth of healing power from the person of the Lord. That it was not the real conductor of this power, but must be understood symbolically, is plain, from the fact that it was not always applied; for example, not in the case of the blind men at Jericho, Matt. xx. 29; Mark x. 46. But this present instance differs from all others in which the spittle occurs. Christ does not spit upon the eye of the blind man, but upon the earth, thus preparing a clay for His purpose. There must have been a special reason for this; and we are the rather led to regard this as a symbolical act, because the second circumstance, the sending to the pool of Siloam, bears so evidently a symbolical character. Gen. ii. 7

gives us the key : “ And the Lord God formed the man out of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.” The allusion to that passage pointed out the great fact, that the creating work of God (ver. 3) was here renewed ; and that the same creating energy which first called man into being, was manifested in this healing act. In the present case, the spitting—which has this in common with the spitting in the other cases, that it was the symbolical conductor of the quickening power of the Healer<sup>1</sup>—corresponds to the in-breathing of the breath of life at the creation. As by means of this the dust became a living being, so by means of the spittle the dust received a healing and quickening power.<sup>2</sup>

Ver. 7. “ And said unto him, Go wash in the pool of Siloam (which is, by interpretation, Sent). He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.”—The blind man did not obtain his sight until he had first washed in the pool of Siloam. There would doubtless be many friendly people among the bystanders who would be glad to guide him thither. But as the pool was in the immediate neighbourhood—the beggar sat probably near the Temple, comp. Acts iii. 2—and in the way which he had daily to take, he might indeed have gone thither alone. Strictly translated, it runs, “ Go, wash into the pool of Siloam ;” and the reason is plain enough, as whatever was washed away entered

<sup>1</sup> The notion of Grotius, “ Quia aqua ad manum non erat, lutum saliva fecit,” is set aside by the consideration that it takes away the manifest connection with these other passages.

<sup>2</sup> The interpretation here given is the most ancient. It goes back almost to the time of the author. Irenæus, on ch. xv. ver. 5, compares ver. 3, “ that the works of God might be manifested in him,” and continues : Hanc enim (sc. plasmationem) per operationem fecit, quemadmodum scriptura ait : sumsit Deus limum de terra et plasmavit hominem. Qua propter et Dominus expuit in terram et fecit lutum et superlinivit illud oculis ; ostendens antiquam plasmationem, quemadmodum facta est, et manum Dei manifestans his qui intelligere possint, per quam e limo plasmatus est homo. Beza expressed the same view with special clearness and precision : Non temere signum istud adhibuit Christus huic miraculo. Non enim cæci istius oculos ut aliorum plurimorum sanavit, sed creatricis illius potentiae vim in eo exseruit : ideoque primi hominis ex humo macerata creationem, quam re ipsi quidem poetæ ignorantes suo Prometheo attribuerent, hoc signo representavit, docens ab eadem illa, per quam hic idem ὁ λόγος primum hominem creavit ad imaginem Dei, supra 1, 3, and 4, pendere hominum et quod ad corpus et quod ad animum attinet restitutionem.

the pool. And it is not without purpose that the expression is “pool of Siloam.” The name Siloam properly belonged only to the *spring*, the present Fountain of Mary, “whose waters flowed through a subterranean canal, circuitous, and 1750 feet long, into the brook of Siloam” (von Raumer). We read in Neh. iii. 15 of the pool of Siloah, תַּלְשׁ; and תַּלְשׁה in that passage corresponds to the preceding יָם. That the name Siloam was originally appropriated only to the spring, is made abundantly plain by many passages of Josephus. In Book i. 4, 1, of the work on the Jewish War, he says: καθήκει μέχρι Σιλωάμ· οὗτῳ γὰρ τὴν πηγὴν γλυκεῖάν τε καὶ πολλὴν οὐσαν ἐκαλοῦμεν; and in ch. ii., καὶ ἔπειτα πρὸς νότον ὑπὲρ τὴν Σιλωάμ ἐπιστρέφον πηγὴν. The fountain of Siloam is referred to alone twice in the Old Testament, in Isa. viii. 6 and Neh. iii. 15. It is of great importance to the understanding of our present passage, that the signification of the name should be held fast. It may be, so far as its form is concerned, either a passive formation from Piel, the reduplication of the second letter of the root being omitted (Ewald, § 156, b), or, which is better (Ewald, § 155, d), an adjectival form like לֹאֵלֶּל, born, שָׁבֵר, drunken, “not as a simple participle, but as an independent adjective further modified.” They are “words which give the idea of an internally fixed and abiding characteristic or property; and thus they are primarily a strengthened form of the simple participles and adjectives.” The participle Pahul תַּלְשׁ denotes one who is on an occasion sent; תַּלְשׁ, on the other hand, a missionary, one whose mission is permanent. Accordingly, the spring did not derive its name from its sending out water; but the passive signification decides the form. And תַּלְשׁ, too, which is used in Neh. iii. 15 instead of תַּלְשׁ, has a passive signification—that generally of a projectile weapon, *missile*. The notion of Rödiger, that the word signified *emissio aquæ, aquæductus*, rests upon the theory, already shown to be wrong, that the name properly belonged to the canal or the pool. The sent required a sender. If the stream of water was called Sent, the fountain must have been the Sender; as we read in Ezek. xxxi. 4 of the Nile, “and sent out her little rivers (conduits) unto all the trees of the field.” But if, as we have shown, the name originally was appropriated to the *spring*, then there must be in the background a sender independent of the water. To

understand this Sender, with Ewald, as an indefinite Christ, "sent forth, flowing freely, streaming abundantly," would be appropriate enough if we found ourselves in the domain of idolatry, which makes gods of all things, and not in the domain of living faith in a personal God. To us the Sender can be no other than He who generally "sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills," Ps. civ. 10, where we have simply a commentary on the name Siloam, just as we also have in Ps. xviii. 17, "He sent from above." And thus viewed, the name Silchim, which we find in Josh. xv. 32 with Ajin (comp. on ch. xi. 23), stands in connection with Siloam. In the dry and parched south country, the springs were pre-eminently regarded as messengers of God. This one was, according to Josephus, sweet, and flowed abundantly; he further seems to intimate that this last property gave it its name. Isaiah, ch. viii. 6, recognises in it, and in the power of blessing which was concealed under its insignificance, a figure of the kingdom of God in Israel; whilst, in opposition to its soft flow, the "waters of the river, strong and many," were a figure of the kingdom of this world. The very remarkable fluctuations which befell the fountain must ever have turned attention towards its supernatural origin and design. Ritter, in the *Erdkunde*, xvi. 447, says, "The Itinerarium Burdig. in the year 333 mentions this spring, which flowed through six days and six nights, but on the Sabbath neither by day nor night. (Hence Pliny, H. N. xxxi. 18: *In Judæa rivus Sabbatis omnibus siccatur.*) Jerome is more definite on Isa. viii. 6. The fountain Siloam lies at the foot of Mount Zion; and its waters do not flow regularly, but only on certain days and hours: then, however, with great tumult, rushing out of hidden caves and holes in the most hidden rocks." The sudden rise and fall of water in the Mary-Fountain, of which William of Tyre says, "interpolatum habens fluctum" (comp. on these fluctuations the remarks upon ch. v. 2; Ritter, p. 456), is even to the present day a mystery; Robinson, xi. 158. Josephus alludes to the abundant flow of the fountain Siloam, at the time of the siege of Titus, as a miracle, *τέρας*; de Bell. Jud. v. 9, 4. "On the ground of these phenomena the Mohammedans attached great value to the brook Siloam: they joined it with Zemzem, and made these two the fountains of paradise:" Ritter, p. 450. It has been also observed

upon ch. v. 2, that many attributed the perturbations of the waters to a dragon concealed within. What is there said concerning the angel who moved the water, is in harmony with the name of Sent.

This explanation of the name of the fountain of Siloam furnishes us the key to the fact of our Lord's having sent the blind man to the pool which was formed out of that fountain. That humble messenger, with its beneficent power spreading around, in Isaiah a symbol of the kingdom of God, was a type of the supreme Divine Messenger; and it is to be observed in relation to this, that it is in John that Christ is described continually as the *Sent* of God. (Grotius: *Christus ubique se vocat missum a patre*, c. iii. 17, 34; v. 36, 38, et alibi passim, unde et ἀπόστολος dicitur, Heb. iii. 1.) As in ch. v. Jesus represents Himself and His Church as the real pool of Bethesda, so He declares Himself here to be the real Sent one, or Siloam; without much demonstration, but infinitely rich in blessing and invigoration for the people of God. And that the symbolical meaning of the act might not be missed, John adds the Greek explanation of the name Siloam. Everywhere, when he appends such an interpretation, he has a deep reason for it; he never does so merely for the sake of etymology: comp. i. 39, 42, 43. Calvin excellently expresses the idea which is stamped upon the whole transaction: "In the person of one man the condition of our nature is delineated; we are all of us from our mother's womb deprived of light and vision, and the cure of this evil is to be sought for only in Christ." Siloam is all the more appropriate as a type of Christ, because our Lord dispenses His benefit through the water of baptism, to which Augustin referred the waters of Siloam: *Lavit ergo oculos in ea piscina, quæ interpretatur missus, baptizatus est in Christo.* Water appears in ch. iii. 5 as one of the indispensable factors of participation in Christ and His kingdom. And we may regard as applicable to the pool of Siloam what Peter says in 1 Pet. iii. 21: ὁ καὶ ημᾶς ἀντίτυπον νῦν σώζει βάπτισμα.

We shall now make some general remarks touching our Lord's miracles of healing on the blind. In harmony with what Isaiah, in ch. xxxv. 5, prophesied of the time of the Messiah, "Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of

the deaf shall be unstopped," these specific miracles assume a pre-eminent place among the wonderful works of Christ. As His individual restorations of the dead to life were types and pledges of the universal bodily resurrection of believers at the end of the world; so the restorations of sight to the blind were primarily signs and pledges that blindness, and generally all the physical misery which sin has introduced, are to be removed by Christ. Then these healings give consolation and hope to that state of abandonment and helplessness which in the Old Testament is so often represented by blindness,—the point of similarity being the inability to find the way: Deut. xxviii. 29; Isa. lix. 10; Job xii. 25; Zeph. i. 17. Whenever we find ourselves without counsel and help, we should look up to Christ as the Saviour of the blind. But the main point is, that the healing of the bodily blind was the pledge of the healing of spiritual blindness. This was included by the prophet Isaiah, as is plain from the fact, that this prophet so often speaks of spiritual blindness and deafness, *e.g.* in ch. xxix. 18, where it is said of the time of the Messiah, "And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness;" ch. xlii. 18, xlivi. 8. Christ speaks often of spiritual blindness: in vers. 39, 41 of this chapter, and in Matt. xv. 14, xxiii. 16, etc. He thereby gives us a hint as to the point of view from which we are to regard the healings of the physically blind; that we are to derive from them inexhaustible assurance that He can and He will cure all our spiritual maladies. The connection between physical and spiritual blindness appears in this narrative more definitely than anywhere else. Jesus, in vers. 35 seq., heals also the spiritual blindness of the man born blind; and we mark that the bodily healing was the means to that higher end, the instrument for the accomplishment of the spiritual cure: comp. especially ver. 39. The final result was, that the man born blind received "the enlightened eyes of the heart," Eph. i. 18. Augustin, therefore, was quite right: *Si quod significat hoc quod factum est cogitemus, genus humanum est iste cæcus: hæc enim cæcitas contigit in primo homine per peccatum, de quo omnes originem duximus non solum mortis sed etiam iniquitatis.*

In vers. 8-12, there is a record of the impression which the event produced in the immediate circle of the healed man's

friends. The result of the whole was, that they could find no way of escaping the acknowledgment of the fact: they had been most intimately acquainted with the personal history and case of the blind man, and to their declaration concerning the matter every reasonable doubter must look for confirmation and decision.

Ver. 8. “The neighbours, therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was a beggar, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?”—In relation to the Pres. Part. *θεωροῦντες*, we may apply with propriety Ewald’s remark (§ 168) concerning the Hebrew participle: “It is, like the Infinitive, altogether a noun in this, that it does not recognise that slight beginning of distinction in time which exists in the verb.” The בְּלִדְעֵוּ לְפָנֶים in Job xlvi. 11 perfectly corresponds, as also Job xx. 7. So also with the participles *καθήμενος* and *προσαιτῶν*. “That he was a beggar,” equivalent to “in his capacity as a beggar.” The fact of his being a beggar intimates at the same time his bodily calamity; for the blind only were, as a rule, beggars by profession: comp. Mark x. 46. The less authenticated reading *τυφλός* (“that he was blind”) sprang from a forgetfulness of the fact that begging presupposed the physical calamity.

Ver. 9. “Some said, This is he; others said, He is like him; but he said, I am he.”—Bengel remarks on “He is like him:” Quidvis prius fingit et putat humana ratio quam miraculum factum credat, v. 18; Act. ii. 13. Sed eo magis confirmatur veritas.

Vers. 10, 11. “Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.”—The healed man’s own declaration had set aside all doubt as to the identity of his person; and now the investigation turns to the manner and process of the cure. The opening of the eyes refers, according to Hebrew phraseology, not so much to the material member, as to the sense of sight. It has been incorrectly inferred from the words, “a man that is called Jesus,” that the blind man had never known anything of the celebrity of Christ. But his description is to be explained by the fact, that he everywhere adheres firmly and simply to that which he had himself experienced; while the willingness with

which he submitted to the treatment of our Lord can be accounted for only on the supposition that he was well acquainted with His fame, and that the report of His specific deeds had reached his ears. The reading *εἰς τὸν Σιλωάμ* is better supported than *εἰς τὴν κολυμβήθραν τοῦ Σιλωάμ*, which seems to have been surreptitiously brought in from ver. 7. But yet it is not impossible that the former reading originated in an effort at compression, and in a comparison with Luke xiii. 4. *'Αναβλέπειν* is thought by many to mean, not seeing again, but looking up. It must, however, be understood, as it is commonly used concerning the restoration of the blind, as for instance in Matt. xi. 5; Mark viii. 25; Luke xviii. 43. Seeing is to man the normal condition. And, therefore, even of a man born blind it may be said, when he is brought into this normal condition, that he has come to see again.

Ver. 12. "Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not."—Jesus had withdrawn, after accomplishing the cure, for the same reason that made Him convey Himself away when He had restored the sick man of thirty and eight years: comp. on ch. v. 13. They inquired where Jesus was, probably that they might question Himself concerning the point which afterwards they consulted and decided upon with the Pharisees. The violation of the Sabbath by Christ's miraculous healing had already, at an earlier period, given offence, comp. ch. vii. 23; and hence this circumstance came all the more readily to their minds.

In vers. 13–34, the investigation of the matter before the Pharisees is narrated.

Ver. 13. "They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind."—Berl. Bib.: "Let us to the learned with this matter—it is for them to investigate. They must know all about it, for it belongs to them. But this was a mistake. They brought a man born blind, but now enlightened, to those who were stone blind still, to men who were bent on increasing in their blindness, and who made the light itself darken them all the more." The Pharisees here denote the parley: comp. on ch. i. 24. They were here represented by individual notabilities. The neighbours aimed primarily only to come to a sure judgment in a controversy which interested themselves; and therefore they brought the man to those who were held

to be the most competent judges, to the “seers” of ver. 39, to those who knew how to distinguish things that differed, Rom. ii. 18. There is no trace here of any “spiritual judicial investigation on the part of the supreme judicature;” and ch. vii. 32 seq. is essentially different. Here the Pharisees are everywhere spoken of; there the ἀρχιερεὺς, the chief of the priests, are coupled with them, and in ver. 45 even occupy the first place, while the mention of the *servants*, and of Nicodemus as one of their number, in ver. 50 (comp. ch. iii. 1), lead to the supposition of the Sanhedrim. Lücke remarks, “John denotes the Sanhedrists also, in ch. vii. 47, merely by the word *οἱ Φαρισαῖοι*. But the more exact definition had in that case preceded already. Nor can ch. xi. 46 be adduced as in point; for in ver. 47 the species follows at once upon the genus. The blind man lay under no external obligation to go with them. But he went willingly, because he had a good conscience, and was perfectly ready to bear testimony to the truth, and to do honour to his Healer. The healed man of ch. v. went, according to ver. 15, voluntarily, and announced to the Jews that Jesus had made him whole.

Ver. 14. “And it was the Sabbath-day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.”—The circumstance here noted was the specific reason why they should bring the matter before the Pharisees. The actual fact they themselves had found to be established. But this was in conflict with the violation of the Sabbath, and they knew not themselves how to solve the contradiction. The preparation of the clay was not introduced in vain: this was held to be a work. Jesus had certainly of set purpose chosen the Sabbath for His work of healing: comp. on ch. v. 9. He designed to give matter of offence to the Pharisees, who, by their exaggerated severity in the externalities of the Sabbath festival, sought to compensate for their lacking spiritual service (Augustin: *Sabbatum carnaliter observabant, spiritualiter sistabant*). And He would teach the people how the Sabbath was really to be used. His polemic in act was not directed against Moses, but against the caricature into which Pharisaism had turned the Mosaic Sabbath. Berlenb. Bible: “The Sabbath was a rest from evil, as also from servile works, which centre in ourselves. But it was not to be a day of rest when the honour of God and the furtherance of our neighbours’ good were concerned.”—Ver. 15. “Then again the Pharisees

also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, "He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see." This was again the second time, after the questioning by the neighbours, ver. 10. They hoped that he would yield to pressure, and be induced to change his declaration according to their mind. But his answer remains steadily consistent, and that was a token of his truth.

Ver. 16. "Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath-day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them."—So plain and palpable was the miracle, that there was a contradiction arising even in the midst of their own party. Those who originated this contradiction were such as Nicodemus, ch. vii. 50; and ch. xii. 42 also, according to which even many of the "rulers" believed on Him, is in strict harmony with our present passage. But the opposers were, as Lampe remarks, inferior to the rest, not only in number, but also in zeal; they assumed the position of a vanishing minority. They omitted the violation of the Sabbath, because it could not be concealed from them that there was a great difference between the Mosaic and the Pharisaic Sabbath. But they did not assert that difference; they contented themselves with laying stress upon the fact of the miraculous healing.

Ver. 17. "They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet."—The Pharisees are the subject of *λέγονται*, as is shown by the *πάλιν*, which refers to ver. 15. And this of itself proves that the questioning had a hostile intent; for the Pharisees were, as a mass, hostile. The interrogations everywhere proceeded from enemies. The dissent was only partial, and it is not further referred to. The matter, in spite of the dissentients, took its course. "That he hath opened thine eyes," is equivalent to "What thinkest thou in reference to it? for whom holdest thou him on account of it?" The question touched the fact first, and then the judgment upon the person. The Pharisees hoped that the healed man would give them in this matter a handle for reaching the fact in a circuitous way. If he was not absolutely sure that Jesus had accomplished the act by supernatural divine powers; if he let fall anything about the possibility of secret means and magical arts, they would

have had something to use in their purpose. But his brief and plain declaration, “He is a prophet,” disconcerted their hopes.

Ver. 18. “But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind; and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.”—“They act,” says Calvin, “as if one should seek to extinguish a flame by his breath.” The Jews here, comp. on ch. i. 19, are identical with the Pharisees in the preceding. They now sought to extract something from the parents of the healed man; and this was the third stage. And here also the result was, that the more they investigate the miracle, in order to bring it into doubt, the more they place it beyond suspicion. They did not believe until they had called the parents,—not as if they would then have believed. The meaning is, that unbelief led them to this procedure. Very frequently an end is specified which is not in itself the ultimate one, but only in a certain relation important, so that the end lying behind it is left unnoticed: comp. Matt. i. 25; Dan. i. 21; *Beitr. Th.* i. s. 66, 67.

Ver. 19. “And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?”—There are three questions here, which the parents answer in their order: Is he your son? Do ye dare still to maintain that he was born blind? And if so, how has he obtained his sight?

Vers. 20–23. “His parents answered them, and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind: but by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age, ask him; he shall speak for himself. These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that He was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore said his parents, He is of age, ask him.”—The parents plainly declare the truth on the first two questions; on the third they do not venture to commit themselves, but they point to their son as trustworthy. The expression *συναντέθειντο*, “they had determined among themselves,” refers rather to a party concert than to a formal decree of the Sanhedrim. Ch. xvi. 2 shows that the latter had not yet been arrived at; proving, moreover, that the Apostles themselves had not yet been cast out of the synagogue. It was quite in harmony with the cunning policy of the Pharisees, that they first

exhibited the excommunication afar off, giving signs that it would come to that, so that every one might take due heed. If they had been precipitate in rushing to conclusions, they might have excited a resolute opposition. The report of a decree which was to be passed sufficed to awe and terrify fearful minds. The New Testament mentions only *one* kind of excommunication,—exclusion from the synagogue, and generally from the fellowship of the people of God: ἀφορίζειν, Luke vi. 22; ἀποσυνάγωγοι, xii. 42, xvi. 2. This first decree was followed directly by the second,—the punishment of death. That the Mishna, in agreement with the New Testament, contains only one kind of excommunication, has been shown by Gildemeister, *Blendwerke des Rationalismus*, 1841.

The fourth stage now follows in vers. 24-34. The Pharisees, on the challenge of the parents, “ask him,” assault the man born blind afresh. They press upon him more rigorously, and seek to extract from him a more agreeable answer. But in vain. The boldness of the healed man increases as he penetrates more fully their design. He deals with them in such a manner that they must at last cast him out.

Ver. 24. “Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.”—“Give God the glory” is derived from Josh. vii. 19, where Joshua says to Achan, “My son, give, I pray thee, glory (Sept. δὸς δόξαν) to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto Him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.” We give God the glory when we, out of reverence for His authority, tell the truth, even though the truth lead to our own shame and destruction. Augustin shows what lay in the background of this pious phrase: Quid est da gloriam Deo? nega quod accepisti. Hoc plane non est gloriam Deo dare, sed Deum potius blasphemare.

Vers. 25-27. “He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes? He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?”—This question contains a latent reproof. Such would be the only justification of the repeated questionings. But of this ye will not

think.—Vers. 28, 29. “Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses’ disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.” We have no proof whatever that he is “of God,” ver. 33; “a teacher come from God,” ch. iii. 2.—Ver. 30. “The man answered and said unto them, Why, herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.” The γὰρ gives the motive of the rejoinder which he makes, and of that expression in his countenance which said, “I must contradict you.” The Hebrew בַּי very often marks such a style of referring to the force of circumstances: Gen. xxix. 32; Exod. iii. 12.—Vers. 31–33. “Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth His will, him He heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.” The οὐδαμέν points to the source of all true knowing in Israel—the Holy Scriptures. There we often find the declaration that God heareth not sinners, but heareth only the righteous who fear Him: for example, in Job xxvii. 9, where it is said of the hypocrite, “Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?” in Ps. lxvi. 18, “If I have regarded iniquity in my heart (had it in my eye), the Lord would not hear me;” Prov. xv. 29, “The Lord is far from the wicked: but He heareth the prayer of the righteous;” Isa. i. 15, l ix. 2, 3. The blind man had doubtless heard this little word from his devout parents, and had kept it in his heart. So the ἐκ τοῦ αἰώνος οὐκ ἡκούσθη is an Old Testament reminiscence: comp. Isa. lxiv. 3.

Ver. 34. “They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.”—The “born in sin” points to Ps. li. But the appended “altogether” hints at an aggravated original sin, which was to be inferred from his having been born blind. We must not make this casting out an excommunication; for those with whom the blind man had to do were not able or inclined to execute this. We have shown that it is erroneous to understand ver. 22 of an already fixed decree to excommunicate the disciples of Jesus. If even the Apostles themselves had not been excommunicated, it is hardly likely that they would proceed

to a formal sentence upon the blind man, who had never yet known and acknowledged Jesus as the Christ. The casting out suggests the place where the transaction occurred: comp. Acts vii. 58, xiii. 50. Doubtless there was another casting out in prospect, of which this one was the earnest and prelude: comp. ver. 22; 3 John 10. It was that which gave it the significance which ver. 35 presupposes.

In vers 35-37, it is recorded how the blind man was led by Christ to faith. Ver. 35. "Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?"—Jesus had at first intentionally withdrawn from the healed man; the act was to exert its influence in his soul like leaven. The Pharisaic opposition was to fan the feeble flame of his faith. And when this was done, "Jesus the good Shepherd sought the poor sheep." The significance of the expression *Son of God* must not be measured according to the notions of the blind man—we can hardly determine what these would be, because deeper views by the side of the more superficial were made current by the sayings of the Old Testament, and by the explanations of the Baptist—but according to the nature of the case, and the teaching of Christ. Faith in the Son of God might have existed—so far as its beginning goes—where the degree of knowledge was as yet very weak. The reality was more powerful than the notion of it. The influence of the Holy Ghost leads the well-disposed and submissive far beyond themselves.

Ver. 36. "He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?"—The *καὶ* which begins the answer has baffled many. But here, as in ch. xiv. 22, Mark x. 26, Luke x. 29, it proceeded only from the lively impulse to connect the answer immediately with the question. The blind man had a presentiment of the meaning of Jesus' question, and therefore he entered into it so vividly.—Ver. 37. "And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen Him, and it is He that talketh with thee." The seeing here must refer to what then was passing, the then present meeting; for when he was healed, the blind man had not seen Jesus. That the two points are kept distinct by *καὶ—καὶ*—not only, but also—is to be explained by the dignity of the Person, and the greatness of the favour which had befallen the blind man.—Ver. 38. "And he said, Lord, I

believe. And he worshipped Him." We must not conclude from this *proskynesis*, that the healed man had any clear knowledge of the full divinity of Jesus. There can be no reasonable question, indeed, that it had a religious significance. John never uses the word in any other sense. But the worship which, according to Matt. iv. 10, is due only to the Lord God, was not only rendered to Him directly, but also to Him in the person of those who bore His image, of His representatives, of the holders of His gifts and offices: comp. my commentary on Rev. xix. 10. And we can infer from this *proskynesis* only that the healed man discerned in Christ a true bearer and representative of the divine glory.

Ver. 39. "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world; that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind."—Jesus made what had taken place the basis of an utterance which excited a conflict betwixt Him and the Pharisees. The universal truth which He here declared, had had its exemplification both in the blind man and the Pharisees. Jesus did not speak only to His disciples, but had all who were present in His view. And as the Pharisees would necessarily take offence at His saying, we may conclude that our Lord foresaw it, and spoke intentionally. *Kρίσις* is, in ch. iii. 19, the judicial act, and *κρίμα* the product of it. To both portions of the company, what had passed was a judicial act; both received their rights: those who sought the path found it, according to the rule which Wisdom in Prov. viii. 17 laid down, "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me." The declaration that Jesus came into the world for judgment, is not contradictory to ch. iii. 17, where it is said that God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world through Him might be saved; for in that passage it is only the first and proper design of the mission of Christ that is spoken of. And here, in harmony with that passage, the saving work upon those who see not takes precedence of the destroying work upon those who see. But, at the same time, that the seeing become blind, must be regarded as a design, because it is the necessary consequence of the manifestation of Christ. Consistently with this saying, our Lord, in Matt. xi. 25, thanks God, not merely that He had revealed truth to the babes, but also that He had hidden it from the

wise. The result, therefore, must accordingly have been one desired and willed by Himself. When the blinding of the wise was placed under the point of view of a Divine judgment, this removed an objection which might be taken—namely, that the chief representatives of Judaism and its culture turned away from Jesus,—those chief men who were beyond all others, as it seemed, fit to test the evidences of His Divine mission.

When Jesus spoke of His coming into the world, He pointed to the fact that His existence as the Son of man was preceded by another Divine and glorious existence: comp. on ch. i. 9. “That those who see not might see:” this was witnessed in the man born blind. In the “Lord, I believe,” the man who had been hitherto blind attained to spiritual sight; for he had been up to this time spiritually blind. He had grown up without cultivation, a simple and mere man. But that which was on the one hand a lack, was on the other an advantage. He knew nothing, but he did not boast himself of his knowledge; and did not, in his proud dependence upon knowing, close his heart against the wisdom from above. And as soon as the Saviour made Himself known as such, he worshipped Him.—“And those that see might be made blind.” The seers were then the Jews, in relation to the Gentiles: comp. Rom. ii. 18–20. Israel had seen much, and his ears had been opened, Isa. xlvi. 20. When this seeing was connected with humility, it was an advantage and a help. But side by side with the advantage, there was also the danger. Among the Jews, again, the Pharisees were the seeing, whom Paul had in view pre-eminently in the passage above alluded to. They were the representatives of the Jewish culture and learning. But their always limited knowledge was attended by its companion, dimness and obscurity. They boasted themselves of their miserable knowledge; shut their minds against the wisdom from above; and assumed the position of judges where it behoved them only to adore. Thus the manifestation of Christ could be to them only a dispensation of blinding. Not only did it make their blindness manifest, but it also increased that blindness; in their embittered opposition to it, they lost the elements of truth which still had survived in their knowledge. The darkness of antichristian Judaism was infinitely more profound than that of the pre-Christian. It everywhere exhibited the plainest traces of a consummate judgment

and doom. The truth that the preaching of the word of God, where it meets with perfect unsusceptibility, is followed by a righteous Divine judgment of deeper blindness, and by ruin as its result, had been plainly declared in Isa. vi. 10, where the Lord says to the prophet, as the representative of all His servants in His kingdom down to Christ, “Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes ; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.” The apparently universal sentence contains a limitation in its reference to the relations then presented before the Lord. Those who *see not* are of the kind of the blind man; those who are such, not merely objectively considered, but also in their spirit,  $\tau\ddot{\omega} \pi\nu\epsilon\mu\alpha\tau i$ , Matt. v. 3, and in their consciousness see not; those who bitterly feel their lack, and carry about with them a sense of longing for help from above. Those who *see* are of the Pharisees’ kind, who boast of their seeing, as generally is the case with them, and presume upon it. There are among those who *see not*, such as do not attain to seeing through Christ; and the not seeing has its own peculiar dangers and hindrances—such, for instance, as dull indifference. So there are among those who *see*, such as make, like Nicodemus, their seeing an advantage, to whom their intellectual knowledge forms a bridge to the spiritual. But this remains always and everywhere true, that the seeing is not itself an absolute good. Our saying points emphatically to the great dangers of culture and knowledge in all ages—dangers, however, which are specially great in times when knowledge has taken a direction estranged from God.

According to the general interpretation, the *seeing* are such as are reputed, or repute themselves, to see, but do not see in reality. This interpretation is not only opposed by the plain expression, in which the Saviour speaks simply of those who see, but also by a series of parallel passages which are obviously written and to be read under the same aspect. To the seeing here correspond the wise and prudent in Matt. xi. 25. They were manifestly those who, in opposition to the uncultivated multitude, were enlightened; those who had the key of knowledge, Luke xi. 52. When the Lord, in Matt. ix. 12, says, *Oὐ χρείαν ἔχοντιν οἱ ισχύοντες ἰατροῦ, ἀλλ' οἱ κακῶς ἔχοντες*, it is plain that the whole are not those who fancy themselves whole. They are those

who keep themselves far removed from a manifest life of sin. The parable of the prodigal son places this matter clearly before our eyes. But behind the relative soundness there may lurk concealed a much worse disease. There is the danger of forgetting that the soundness is only relative; and of coming to despise the true means of help for the deeply hidden malady and peril. So even in Luke v. 32, where the Lord says, *Oὐκ ἐλήλυθα καλέσαι δικαούς, ἀλλ' ἀμαρτωλοὺς εἰς μετάνοιαν*, the righteous are not merely the imaginary righteous. The Pharisees were really *righteous* in relation to the publicans and harlots, and the Jews in relation to the Gentiles; but such righteous persons “who need no repentance,” Luke xv. 7, are, as is emphatically shown in Eccles. vii. 15–17, in many respects worse than open sinners, because they will not admit the regeneration, because they are always filled with pride and presumption, and everywhere inclined to act as judges and condemn others. Beneath the *plus* there is concealed, in all such quasi-righteousness, a most miserable *minus*. Such a righteousness, although not a mere imagination, may under certain circumstances prove a great and insurmountable obstacle to salvation.

Ver. 40. “And some of the Pharisees which were with Him heard these words, and said unto Him, Are we blind also?”—Jesus was here, as usual in His exits, surrounded by an immense multitude: comp. ch. x. 19–21. Among these were found a number of Pharisees who were wont to follow the Lord as spies, and watch all His steps and movements: Luke xi. 54, xiv. 1. These well understood that the declaration of Jesus bore the character of a challenge, and was meant for them. They also rightly discerned that, if they were to become blind through Christ’s manifestation, it must follow that they had been before, although in a certain sense seeing, yet in another and more important sense, blind; just as in Matt. xv. 14 they were exhibited as blind leaders of the blind, apart from their relation to Christ, through which they only became *more blind*. For nothing but such a previously existing blindness could, as being misunderstood and denied, bring down upon them the judgment of blindness. And it was this charge on the part of Christ that excited the pride of the Pharisees to the extreme of rebellion. But this moral perturbation was itself a proof how well grounded was the reproach. “It was a manifest sign of

their blindness," says Quesnel, "that they knew not that they were blind." It is altogether a mistake to interpret, "They thought they were reckoned amongst the *not seeing*, who stood in need of spiritual help from Jesus." Such *intellectual* misunderstandings among the men who "saw," are at once to be rejected. The weakness of the Pharisees was always in the *spiritual* domain.

Ver. 41. "Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."—"Jesus," observes Lyser, "does not retract what He had said, but rather charges them with a double blindness; one through which they saw nothing in spiritual things, and another through which they did not understand that they were blind." This *deeper* blindness Jesus had already, in ver. 39, laid to their charge, so that He here only sincerely holds fast what He had there asserted. "If ye were blind," is accordingly equivalent to "If ye merely suffered under that simple blindness which is the universal disease of human nature, blind from the birth," "ye would not have sinned," that is, no special sin, none of all-penetrating significance: comp. ch. xv. 22, 24. That Jesus does not intend to withdraw natural blindness from the region of sin, is shown by "your sin remaineth." Accordingly, the "ye would have no sin" is equivalent to "no abiding, unpardonable sin." The "your sin abideth" forms the antithesis to "his righteousness endureth for ever," which, in Ps. cxii. 3, 9, is said concerning the devout man; it is parallel with "it shall not be forgiven, neither in this world nor in the world to come" of Matt. xii. 32, and "ye shall die in your sin" of John viii. 21. As in this last quoted passage, so in the present one, sin means the aggregate guilt of sin. And with the sin the corresponding wrath of God bears a permanent character: comp. ch. iii. 36. The *οὖν*, which Lachmann brackets and Tischendorf omits, occurs so disproportionately often in John, that Greek transcribers must have felt a strong inclination to strike it out.

Our Lord takes occasion, from the conflict with the Pharisees to which the healing of the blind man had given birth, to establish His whole relation to them. In ch. x. 1-18, He exhibits Himself as the good Shepherd, in opposition to them as wicked shepherds. And this relation of opposition rests upon an Old Testament basis. Jeremiah, in ch. xxiii. 1-8, places

Messiah the good Shepherd in contrast with the evil pastors who destroyed and scattered the sheep of the Lord's pasture. There the wicked pastors are primarily wicked kings (see the Christology on the passage); but in the time of Christ the place of these was taken by the Pharisees, in whose hands was for the most part all the civil authority that still existed. Ezekiel follows Jeremiah in his prediction concerning the prophets of Israel, ch. xxxiv. Destruction is prophesied against the wicked shepherds, the perverse rulers of the people; and salvation is promised to the lost sheep of Israel through the Lord, who would Himself assume the pastoral office over them, and guide them by His servant David. There we read in ver. 23, "And I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even My servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd." Jeremiah and Ezekiel are followed by Zechariah in ch. xi. Israel, devoted by God's judgment to destruction, appears there as a flock doomed to slaughter. The angel of the Lord takes to himself the shepherd office over the poor, and arouses himself to deliver them from the evil pastors who lead them to destruction. But the rebellion of the wicked shepherds, and of the flock also, constrain him to give up his charge to the full misery which only through him had been hitherto averted. To these prophecies of the Old Testament, our Lord's discourses in the other three Evangelists often recur. With allusion to them, He declares Himself to be sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and exhibits Himself as the good Shepherd, Luke xv. 1-7.

Ch. x. 1. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."—With reference to the "verily, verily," Quesnel observes, "All is truth in the words of Jesus Christ. But when He points expressly to that fact, it shows either that what He says is of especial importance, or that the human spirit is especially prejudiced against it." "With this high assurance," says Heumann, "our Lord never begins a discourse." And the strict connection of what here follows with what had preceded, is plain from this, that the *αὐτοῖς*, to them, in ver. 6, refers back to ch. ix. 40. The people of God frequently appear in the Old Testament, following Ps. xxiii.,

under the figure of a flock; *e.g.* in Micah vii. 14, Ezek. xxxiv. 31, "And ye My flock, the flock of My pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God." As the members of the Church of God are the sheep, so the sheep-fold is the kingdom of God. The *door* is the Divine calling: that this is with God, Christ continually declares throughout the Gospel of John especially, and grounds upon it His own authentication; *e.g.* ch. v. 36, 37, vi. 29, vii. 28, 29, viii. 42, and compare what is said upon ch. iii. 17.—"I came from God, neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me:" whosoever can say that with Christ, enters through the door into the sheep-fold. Who those are that go *not* in through the door, is made clear by Jer. xxiii. 21, where it is said, with reference to the false prophets, "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken unto them, yet they prophesied;"\* and in ver. 32, "Yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord" (comp. also ch. xiv. 14, xxvii. 15, xxix. 9); and also by Ezek. xiii. 2, where the false prophets are said to "prophesy out of their own hearts," and to "follow their own spirit:" comp. ver. 17. The Divine mission is also in Rom. x. 15 made prominent as the indispensable condition and foundation of ministry in the word:  $\pi\hat{\omega}\varsigma \delta\grave{e} \kappa\eta\rho\acute{\nu}\xi\sigma\sigma\iota \grave{e}\grave{\alpha}\nu \mu\hat{\eta} \grave{\alpha}\pi\sigma\tau\alpha\lambda\hat{\omega}\sigma\iota$ . What is here said with formal generality, must be taken concretely according to the matter in hand. For the general propositions are, in this and the following verses, uttered with reference to the definite relations of those to whom our Lord is speaking. He that entereth not in by the door, and is consequently a thief and a robber, is the Pharisee who, like the false prophets of old times, set himself up as a spiritual leader of the people on his own impulse, and without any Divine vocation. How the existence of a Divine call may be known, the Lord teaches us in Matt. vii. 16, where He says in reference to the Pharisees, the false prophets of the present, "By their fruits ye shall know them." These fruits consist in pure doctrine and in holy life. Where these are not found, but instead of them error, pride, ambition, avarice, there can be no Divine vocation. And the Pharisees had on the present occasion sufficiently shown what their fruits were, and consequently how the matter stood with regard to their Divine vocation. They had striven to extinguish the pure light of the act of God

accomplished by Christ : they had placed themselves as obstacles between Christ, the highest Sent of God, and the people ; they had shown themselves to be blind, who yet maintained that they saw.—It is altogether confusing to suppose that Christ is the door, and to support this by saying that in ver. 7 He expressly so expounds it, in consequence of the misunderstanding of His hearers. That verse is not the exposition of our present parable, but introduces a new one. Nor is it the door of the sheep-fold that is there spoken of, but the door of the sheep ; not of the manner in which vocation to service in the kingdom of God is obtained, but membership or fellowship in the kingdom of God.—“The same is a thief and a robber.” The worst thieves and robbers are those who seize upon the possessions of the kingdom of God, who deal dishonestly with the truth and with the salvation of souls ; and this is done by all who thrust themselves without vocation forward as guides in the kingdom of God. We read of wicked priests in Hos. vi. 9, “And as troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of the priests murder in the way to Shechem ;” that is, they are not better than common murderers who lay in wait for poor wanderers in the way to Shechem, that led across the mountain range of Ephraim. He that causes many to stumble at the law, as in Mal. ii. 8 is charged upon the priests, steals and robs from the people their noblest goods, more precious than gold and much fine gold.

Ver. 2. “But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.”—The undertone is, “And thus I am the true Shepherd, because I have entered in through the door of Divine vocation, and have been sent to the lost sheep of Israel by God.” All Christ’s ministers and under-shepherds must test themselves by what Christ, their Master, here says concerning Himself. “We have in these words,” says Quesnel, “the tokens and properties and obligations of a good pastor. The first is his legitimate entrance through the internal vocation of Jesus Christ ; that is, through impulses which proceed from His Spirit, aims which tend only to His glory, motives which seek only the good of His Church and the salvation of souls, the accomplishment of the will of God, perfect consecration to His service, and the benefit of the least of His sheep.”

Ver. 3. “To him the porter openeth ; and the sheep hear

his voice : and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.”—The porter is God, who opens to the true Shepherd, Christ—in whom the ideal person of the good Shepherd is realized—an entrance into men’s hearts. The expressions of ch. vi. 44 furnish a commentary here: “No man can come to Me, except the Father, which hath sent Me, draw him ;” as also ver. 45: “Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me.” We must not suppose that such a comparison with a door-keeper is unworthy of the Divine Being. It is not God in His personality who appears under the figure of a porter; but God as exercising a specific function and influence. And how low the Scripture goes in such comparisons, is shown by Hos. v. 12: “Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah as rottenness,” where not God in Himself, but in His destroying energy, is compared to the moth and the worm. So also the comparison with a lion, in ver. 14, is embarrassing, if we forget that it only refers to a specific action. Acts xiv. 27 gives us a parallel, so far as the expression goes, ὁ Θεὸς ἡρωτεῖ τοὺς ἔθνεστι θύραν πίστεως; xvi. 14. It is not so obvious to refer the porter to the Holy Ghost; that would point us rather to counsel and teaching. But it is according to the doctrine of Jas. i. 17, where every good gift is finally traced up to God for its origin. We are indeed taught by chap. xvi. 13 that it is the Holy Ghost who leads us into all truth. But the Father worketh, as through the Son, so also through the Holy Ghost. It is clear, however, that the activity which is spoken of here is not assigned to God in contradistinction to Christ: this is evident from what was said upon ch. vi. 44, and is further confirmed by Acts xvi. 14, where the same activity is attributed to the Lord that is, according to ver. 15, to Christ. Here lies the truth of the remark of Cyril and Augustin, that Christ is His own porter. But a direct reference to Christ is as inappropriate as a direct reference to the Holy Ghost.

That the sheep hear the voice of the good Shepherd, is an immediate consequence of the fact that the porter opens the way to Him. “And He calleth His own sheep by name.” His own sheep are not here placed in contrast with other sheep that are not His. For all sheep, as such, are His own, and in this lies the reason of that tender relation in which He stands to

them, as contradistinguished from that of the hireling whose the sheep are not, and who consequently has no care for them, ver. 12 ; and especially from that of the thieves and robbers, ver. 11, for whom the sheep have value only so far as they can gratify their selfish desires upon them. At the foundation of all lie those passages of the Old Testament in which Israel is represented as the peculiar possession of Jehovah : comp. on ch. i. 11. And these passages concur all the more expressly with our present one, inasmuch as Jehovah appeared in the flesh in Christ ; and even in the Old Testament, not all the bodily descendants of Israel were the possession of God, but only the devout, the true Israelites : comp. on ch. i. 48. To "He calleth them by name" corresponds in ver. 14 the "I know My sheep." The name is the expression of the personal individuality. If the good Shepherd knoweth each, it shows that the individual named is more to Him than a mere member of the species, and as such insignificant ; but that he is in himself an object of the discerning and loving regard of his Lord, as Jesus in ch. xx. 16 summed up all that Mary was to Him in the naming of her name. This is the peculiar significance of the mention of the name throughout the whole Old Testament, wherever it there occurs. On Ps. cxlvii., "He telleth the number of the stars ; He calleth them all by their names" (comp. Isa. xl. 26, "that bringeth out their host by number : He calleth them all by names"), it is remarked in my commentary, "Counting is connected with naming, which presupposes a thorough knowledge of the nature and peculiarity of the stars (and a loving regard of them), the reflection of which is the name." In Ex. xxxiii. 12, 17, "I know thee by name" is parallel with "thou hast found grace in My sight." In Isa. xlivi. 1, "I know thee by name" is followed by "thou art Mine." "And He leadeth them out :" ἐξάγει is a pastoral expression. He leadeth them out that they may find pasture, ver. 9, "and want nothing," Ps. xxviii. 1, but have life and abundant sufficiency.—That which Jesus here says concerning His sheep, who hear His voice and yield themselves up to His care, forms at the same time His account and explanation of the fact that the greater portion of the people rejected Him. Had this rejection been perfectly unanimous, He could not have been the true Messiah. The existence of an election was the

necessary seal set upon His Divine mission. And this election is expressly mentioned as early as Zech. xi. 11. In opposition to the wicked shepherds and those adhering to them, concerning whom it is said in ver. 8, "And My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred Me," ver. 11 declares, "And so the poor of the flock that waited on me knew that it was the word of the Lord." On this my Christology remarks: "From these words it appears that the labours of the good Shepherd were not entirely vain, but that a little band of true disciples attached themselves to Him. These (the *iδια πρόβατα*, who follow the true Shepherd, John x. 4, but flee from the hireling shepherd, ver. 5, who know the true Shepherd, ver. 15) are described as those who observed Him, who continually directed their looks to Him, and did all things according to His will and direction."

Ver. 4. "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice."—Instead of *πρόβατα*, Lachmann and Tischendorf read *πάντα*. This is not spoken of "the living and affectionate fellowship which subsists between the *guides* appointed by Christ over God's people, and God's people themselves;" but Christ alone is the good Shepherd. On "and the sheep follow Him" rests Rev. xiv. 4, "These are they who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth."

Ver. 5. "And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."—The stranger is the Pharisee, and, as represented by him, all the enemies of Christ, the good Shepherd. The stranger is the intruder, whose own the sheep are not, and who hence has no heart towards them. Our expression contains a prophecy of the perfect separation of the Church of Christ from the synagogue entirely ruled over by Phariseeism. In the time when John wrote, this prophecy was already accomplished. Judaism was in direct antagonism to the Christian Church: comp. on ch. i. 19. In Rev. ii. 9, iii. 9, the former is exhibited as the synagogue of Satan. The *strangers*, consequently, afterward returned with their teaching into the bosom of the Christian Church. "A good shepherd," says Quesnel, "is never forsaken of the elect sheep. They know, through the light of the chief Shepherd, and by the marks which He has given, how to distinguish true pastors from thieves and robbers." And

Anton observes : “ The sheep would be ill off if spiritual discretion were made dependent upon marvellous strange things, unheard-of novelties, knowledge of Latin, and the like. I know what presses on my soul, what can satisfy my hungry soul ; and thus I know when it is shown me the true salvation from its misery.” But the essential antithesis here is between Christ and the stranger. The true servants of Christ come into view only so far as Christ Himself is manifested in them, and is known by His sheep.

Ver. 6. “ This parable spake Jesus unto them ; but they understood not what things they were which He spake unto them.”—*Παροιμία* occurs in none of the Evangelists but John : the others have *παραβολὴ*, which he never uses. As *לֹvuּת* is translated in the Septuagint by both these words interchangeably, we cannot assume that there is any real distinction between them. We read, in Matt. xxi. 45, “ And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard His parables, they perceived that He spake of them.” The Pharisees doubtless perceived the same thing here. They must have been the exact opposite of the “ seeing ” which described them in ch. ix. 39—they must have been absolutely stupid—if they had not marked that Jesus would represent Himself as the good Shepherd, and them as the strangers and thieves and robbers. This would all the less escape them, inasmuch as the present incident was only one single act in a conflict which was personal throughout, and in which all referred to the antithesis between Christ and the Pharisees ; in which all His symbolical language was not uncommon, but moved within the domain of the Old Testament, and found its commentary in passages of the Old Testament already often adduced,—only although they felt the sting, they could not in the essential matter understand Him, or the meaning of His words : comp. on ch. viii. 27. They were without the true insight into their own wickedness and misery ; and consequently it was altogether unintelligible to them how they could be described by Him as thieves and robbers.. They were without the true insight into the dignity of Christ ; and consequently what He said concerning Himself as the true Shepherd was altogether impenetrable. Thus Augustin gives what is essentially the true meaning : *Christum negando nobleant intrare servandi sed foris remanere perdendi.* There is a total misapprehension at

the bottom of the following remark : “The Pharisees did not understand what He spoke to them allegorically ; and therefore (*οὖν*) Jesus found Himself necessitated to explain to them the main point, on the right understanding of which all depended,—that is, what was the meaning of the door.” It was not our Lord’s custom to explain His parables to His enemies : that He reserved for the disciples alone. Ver. 7 cannot contain the interpretation of the door in ver. 1 ; for it does not speak, like ver. 1, of the door of the sheep-fold, but of the door of the sheep. Ver. 7 does not usher in an exposition of the first parable, but an independent second discourse. *Oὖν* must not, especially in John, be pressed so hard. It very often marks nothing more than a transition. But if its full meaning must be laid upon it, then their not understanding is by it declared to be the reason why Jesus continued to impress upon their hearts the same truth in another form.

Ver. 7. “Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.”—Wherefore does Jesus give them in a different shape, and a second time, the truth which they had shown themselves incapable of understanding ? Ch. ix. 39 gives us the answer. He would thereby make the judgment of their blindness more complete. And this obviously did not exclude the saving influence of His words upon individual susceptible minds, comp. ver. 21 ; and then we must remember that the words addressed to them were not designed for them alone. They belong to the Christian Church of all ages. The “verily, verily,” points back to ver. 1, and shows that this is a truth corresponding to that which was there spoken, which to deny or to detract from in any degree is blasphemy. Lampe : *Hoc unicum fundamentum omnis fidei, omnis spei, omnis consolationis electorum est.* That the door of the sheep is the door for the sheep, the medium of their entrance into the sheep-fold, the means of their participation in the kingdom of God and its blessings, is shown plainly by vers. 8–10, especially ver. 9. This last gives the precise explanation of the sense in which Jesus terms Himself the door of the sheep. Expositors would never have thought of understanding by the door of the sheep the door to the sheep, had not the unlucky identification of the door in ver. 7 with the door in ver. 1 blinded their eyes to what is as clear as the day. There is, indeed, a connection with the door in ver. 1,

but it is to be looked for rather more deeply. In ver. 1, Jesus had spoken of the door for the shepherds,—that is, their divine vocation; here He speaks of the door for the sheep,—that is, Him who was chosen of God. The door and the door correspond. In Christ's mission from God lies the assurance that without Him there can be no entrance into the kingdom of God.—Grotius has rightly given the connection of this verse with the other: *Superiore similitudine non exposita aliam affinem orditur.* And so also Heumann: "But when he says, 'Then said Jesus unto them again,' he gives us to understand that the Lord by a new discourse would show them who He was; that is, as Peter showed, in Acts iv. 12, that there was no other than Himself by whom they might attain salvation." When Jesus here says, "I am the door," He places Himself in opposition to the Pharisees, who gave themselves out to be the door, and thereby denied that Christ was the door. The following verse shows this still more clearly.

Ver. 8. "All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them."—Before He further dilates upon the clause, "I am the door of the sheep," our Lord denounces and repudiates those who were His rivals in the honour of being the door; just as underneath the very words, "I am the door," there lay the denial, "ye are not." After repelling them, He reassumes the "I am" in ver. 9. "All," or "as many as" came before Me, excludes all notion of a rhetorical or popular manner of speaking. "Who came before Me," that is, supplying from what goes before, as the door of the sheep; and this supplement is confirmed further by the fact that this negation is presently followed in ver. 9 by the positive declaration, "I am the door." Anton is perfectly right in saying, "Since shortly before in ver. 7, and presently afterwards in ver. 9, the *έγώ εἰμι* stands—and Christ thus opposes Himself to them—the context shows that He speaks of later messiahs, who only mock their souls, but do not supply them with what they need and long for." The supposition of some of the fathers, as Chrysostom, that the clause must be limited to those who pretended to be messiahs, such as Theudas and Judas of Galilee, contains an element of truth. But we must not so much think of these obscure deceivers as of the Pharisees. Herod sought, in a certain sense, to set himself in the

place of Christ. His temple-building had reference to Hag. ii. 7, and proceeded from the design of bringing the desired “end of the days” into the present time: comp. my Christology on the passage. But it was in a much more extensive manner and degree that the Pharisees usurped a messianic position. In the properly spiritual domain, there was no room left for Christ to act. He served them only as the means for the subversion of the Roman dominion; and if He aimed at anything beyond that, they rose against Him in fanatical hatred. They had already exalted themselves into the dignity of door of the sheep: they opened and shut, at their own caprice, the door of the kingdom of God: comp. Matt. xxiii. 13, and John ix. 22. They claimed for their human ordinances an absolute authority; they bore themselves, not as servants, but as masters and fathers, Matt. xxiii. 8–10. The Temple was always to them the centre of the Church; the Mosaic sacrificial system, which was entirely in their hands, and had, under their perverseness, lost its original character, was to them quite sufficient for the purposes of atonement; and whosoever questioned that, or the central position of their high priest, was to them an accursed heresiarch. As they constituted the then existing manifestation of antichrist—just as afterwards the Roman power—the conflict between them and Christ was a conflict of life and death for dominion; and the declaration, “I am the door,” must necessarily have been *here* encountered by the same negation which is heard so plainly and expressly in Matt. xxi. 38. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. Such a manifestation had never existed before the Pharisees. Moses and the Pharisees, to whom the Manichees foolishly made our present passage apply, arguing from it that they were not sent from God, August. c. Faustum, i. 2, c. 4, never made any pretension to being the door of the sheep; they made themselves no more than servants of God who showed the way of salvation, only organs and media of Divine influence. Quite otherwise was it with the Pharisees, who arrogated for their human traditions and for themselves an absolute authority, and who exalted themselves into rulers of the faith. When we limit the apparently too general expression, which manifestly the connection restricts to the wicked shepherds of Israel in Zech.

xi. 8,—the counterpart of “I am the door,”—we are saved from the necessity of a series of untenable suppositions. The absence of  $\pi\rho\circ\ \epsilon\mu\omega\nu$  in many Codd. is only a clumsy attempt to turn aside the blow from Moses and the prophets. The assertion that “the expression is popular, and not to be pressed,” which is refuted by the  $\delta\sigma\omega\iota$  added to the  $\pi\acute{a}\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ , is only an indirect confession of helpless embarrassment. The remark, that “the most obvious limitation which we can make is to the contemporary order of teachers,” has in the  $\epsilon\iota\sigma\iota$  no support; for those who had borne the same character at an earlier date *are* thieves and robbers: the condemnation is not passed upon their historical existence, but upon their permanent character. And such a restriction yields no real advantage, since it must come into collision with the claims of John the Baptist. Finally, to assert that the expression is unusually harsh becomes quite needless so soon as we understand that, according to a true exposition, only the Pharisees were included in it—they being the only ones who among the Israelites pretended to be masters of faith. We have then the counterpart in Matt. xxiii. and Matt. vii. 15, where the Pharisees are termed ravenous wolves; in Matt. ix. 36, according to which the people in the time of the dominion of the Pharisees were like sheep without a shepherd. The  $\eta\lambda\theta\circ\iota\omega$  points to the fact that the Pharisaic usurpation had begun before the coming and manifestation of Christ; the  $\epsilon\iota\sigma\iota$ , to the fact that it still continued in the present time. Yet, as we have already shown, the  $\epsilon\iota\sigma\iota$  is not to be limited to the manifestations of the present.

Thieves and robbers: equivalent to destroyers. Grotius compares Jer. xxiii. 1, “Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture! saith the Lord;” and Ezek. xxxiv. 2, 3, “Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock.” Through God’s providence it came to pass that, in the last days of the Jewish state, Pharisaism degenerated into an open and common character of robbery.—In the words “but the sheep did not hear them,” the sheep are the *true* members of God’s people: comp. on ch. i. 48. Prophecy in the Old Testament distinguishes between the sheep and the goats: Ezek. xxxiv. 17,

comp. Hitzig. The man born blind gives us an exemplification of this sentence: all the persuasion of the Pharisees was thrown away upon him; they had to tell him, "Thou art his disciple;" and he definitively turned away from them, saying, "Lord, I believe," and worshipped Christ. The Pharisees showed themselves to be thorough thieves and robbers by their machinations to separate him from Christ, the door of the sheep, the only source of salvation, and to bring him over to their own side. He becomes, as it were, a symbolical person, the representative of the not-seeing class, who are made to see by Christ, and by Him snatched from the vengeance of "those who see." In the conflict of Christ and the Pharisees over this individual soul, the whole contrast comes out in full character.

Ver. 9. "I am the door; by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."—"I am the door" returns with strengthened emphasis after the wolves in sheep's clothing have been repelled,—those wolves who had pretended to be themselves the door. By going out and in, Deut. xxxi. 2, Ps. cxxi. 8, or, as it less frequently occurs, in the inverted order, Deut. xxviii. 6, Jer. xxxvii. 4, Acts i. 21, the phraseology of the Old Testament describes the whole commerce of life as it moves in the two spheres of the household and publicity. The unrestrictedness of the going out and in, points to the fact that, through their relation to Christ, the development of life has a free course opened before it. Jesus, assuring this unrestricted freedom by His guidance and guardianship, exhibits Himself as the true Joshua, according to Num. xxvii. 16, 17; as the true David, 1 Sam. xviii. 16; as the true Solomon, 2 Chron. i. 10, where Solomon says to the Lord, "Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people." *Finding pasture* is afterwards explained by having life, and more abundantly. We may comp. Ezek. xxxiv. 14, "I will feed them in a good pasture;" Isa. xl. 11. All that the verse contains belongs, according to the unforced interpretation of the passage, not to the shepherd, but to the sheep.

Ver. 10. "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."—The thief is the Pharisee. Stealing, killing, destroying, are equivalent to fun-

damental destruction and ruin in spiritual and bodily respects : Matt. xxiii. 14 shows that the latter is not to be excluded. Under the dominion of Pharisaism, the people of God were in every sense ἐσκυλμένοι καὶ ἐρριμένοι ωσεὶ πρόβατα μὴ ἔχοντα ποιμένα, Matt. ix. 36. The original passages are Jer. xxiii. 2, Ezek. xxxiv. 2, 3. When Jesus pledges to His sheep abundance, He exhibits Himself as the good Shepherd of Ps. xxiii., whose flock can say, “I want nothing,” ver. 1 ; “ my cup runneth over,” ver. 3.

Ver. 11. “I am the good Shepherd : the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.”—The words, “I am come that they might have it abundantly,” in their reference to Ps. xxiii., return back from the figure of the door to the earlier figure of ver. 2, that of the good Shepherd, which the Old Testament makes still more familiar. The Lord first lays down the general proposition, “I am the good Shepherd,” and then develops it down to ver. 18, showing in what way He will approve Himself to be the true Shepherd. The article primarily notes the ideal person of the good Shepherd embodied actually in Christ. Luther’s translation, “*a good shepherd*,” is less inexact than on the first glance it might appear. But when Jesus presupposes this ideal of the good shepherd to be known to His hearers, He indirectly points to the Old Testament, on the expressions of which alone such a knowledge could rest. We must not limit ourselves to those passages of the Old Testament which refer—like those of Jer. xxiii., Ezek. xxxiv., and Zech. xi., already considered—directly to the Messiah as the Shepherd of Israel. We must include in our range also those passages in which we read of David being a shepherd and feeding his flock,—of David, who should gloriously reappear in his greater descendant, 2 Sam. vii. 8 ; Ps. lxxviii. 70, 71 ; 1 Chron. xi. 2. So also the passages in which Jehovah appears as the Shepherd of Israel, Ps. xxiii. ; Isa. xl. 11 ; Ezek. xxxiv. 11. That which the Lord in the Old Testament did to His people, He did by His Angel, His Mediator. Thus was His countenance turned upon His Church ; and it was manifested in the incarnate Christ. In Christ, David and Jehovah are at once and at the same time exhibited, as is remarkably seen in Micah v. 4, where we read of Messiah as proceeding from Bethlehem, and thus belonging to the race of David : “And He shall stand and

feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord His God." The great King of the lineage of David is so intimately one with God, that the whole fulness of the divine power and glory belongs to Him. If we ask what the passages were which the Lord had particularly in view, we must think first of Ezek. xxxiv. 23, "And I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even My servant David : he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd ;" and then of Ps. xxiii. To this latter points, not only the "abundantly" of ver. 10, which is the positive side of the Psalm's negative "want nothing," but also the *ó καλός*. In Ps. xxiii. there is the full detail of all that a *good* shepherd does in all departments ; this is the very essence of the Psalm. The Lord the good Shepherd is its theme.

After Jesus had laid down this theme, He proceeds at once in its development to the supreme expression of His shepherd-fidelity, the most effectual means by which He approves His care of the sheep—the sacrifice of His life for them. All circumstances around concurred with the time to bring this near to His thoughts. As it respects the former, the wolf was directly before His eyes (comp. ver. 12) ; He had to do with those who were alreadyconcerting their plan to put Him to death, and to get the sheep in their own power. And as it respects the latter, the narrative has reached the last half-year of the life of Jesus : " Yet a little while am I with you." He had said in ch. vii. 33, " And then I go to Him that sent Me :" comp. ch. viii. 21. The words are, " The good Shepherd *lays down* His life for the sheep. The expression, " laying down the soul for any one," does not occur anywhere else independently in the New Testament. It is never found in profane writers ; nor is it familiar to Hellenistic usage. It must be referred back to the Old Testament, and specifically to Isa. liii. 10, where it is said of Christ, " when He shall make, or place, His soul an offering for sin,"—that is, give His soul, for placing often stands in Hebrew for giving ;—when He shall give up His soul as an offering for sin, or when He, the servant of God, shall present it as a sin-offering. This will be plain, if we consider : 1. Its Hebraistic character. We cannot tell what to do with the expression, if we do not take it back to the Hebrew. According to Lücke and De Wette, *θεῖναι* is used in the sense of laying

aside ; but this is too negative. Manifestly the Hebraism *place* for *give* has passed over into the New Testament Greek ; and this is confirmed by the parallel δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ, Mark x. 45 ; Matt. xx. 28. 2. That the unusual phrase occurs in this one discourse of Christ no less than five times, with such evident design and such emphasis as cannot be explained save on the ground of its being a direct reference to an important passage of the Old Testament. 3. That the phrase is used by our Lord always, as by Isaiah, concerning His sacrificial death : comp. John xv. 13 with this. The ὑπέρ of itself means only *for*, to the advantage of. But the expression, general in itself, obtains a more specific sense by its reference to the fundamental passage, Isa. liii. 10. There the offering of the soul of Christ is termed מַשְׁנָה, satisfaction or compensation. He provides for the sins of men, which could not be forgiven without an equivalent, the offering which the sinners themselves could never have found,—and thus effects the justification of sinners before God.

Christ is here said to lay down His life for the sheep : in ch. iii. 16, on the other hand, we read of the love of God to the *world*. But the benefit reaches only the sheep, equivalent to those who believe in ch. iii. 16. Thus in a certain sense it was displayed only to the sheep. But in another sense the whole world partakes the benefit, inasmuch as the way stands open to every one to become by faith one of the sheep.—What our Lord says here is a sign to His servants also. “Those,” says Lyser, “who forsake their flocks in the time of persecution or pestilence or war, are reckoned amongst the hirelings, as we shall hear.”

Vers. 12, 13. “But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth ; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.”—It is altogether wrong to make the hireling signify the Pharisaic misleader of the people. The Pharisee was rather the wolf : comp. Matt. vii. 15, where the Pharisees are called λίκοι ἄρπαγες. The sheep, the believers, were entrusted to the hireling. But this will not suit the application to the Pharisees, to whom, in ver. 1, all Divine mission was denied, and who were described as thieves and robbers. If the Pharisaic leaders of the people were this hire-

ling, who would be the wolf from whom the hireling should have protected the sheep ? The hireling is no real antithesis to Christ, but merely an imagined contrast. It is equivalent to, "If I were a hireling, I should fly." The person, here primarily only an imagined one, comes into reality in those ministers of the Church of Christ who fly at times and under circumstances when, according to Christ's example, they should lay down their lives. They show thereby that they were not actuated by higher motives when they assumed the pastoral office,—the functions of which, until the time of danger came, they discharged with more or less semblance of propriety,—but only by motives of low selfishness. Augustin : Quis est ergo mercenarius ? Sunt in ecclesia quidam præpositi, de quibus Paulus apostolus dixit : sua quærentes, non quæ Jesu Christi. Quid est sua quærentes ? non Christum gratis diligentes, non Deum propter Deum quærentes, temporalia commoda consecstantes, lucris inhiantes, honores ab hominibus appetentes. The good shepherd, the wolf, the hireling, are the three persons who are for ever recurring in the history of the Church : comp., in reference to the wolf, Acts xx. 29. The wolf is the manifest enemy of the life which is from God, of that life which constitutes the substance of the Church : the hireling is the indifferent one, "serving his own belly ;" and it is specified as the token of the hireling, that the sheep are not his own. As the hireling forms primarily only the antithesis of Christ, it is therefore presupposed that the sheep are Christ's own. The Lord thus arrogates to Himself what in the Old Testament is appropriated to God alone : comp. on ver. 3, Ps. xcv. 7, "For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand ;" Ps. c. 3, "His people, and the sheep of His pasture." But this mark appears to refer to the faithful shepherds, as well as the unfaithful, of the Church apart from Christ, to the class "hirelings." This, however, is only in appearance. The faithful shepherds are incorporated with the "chief Shepherd," 1 Cor. xii. 12 ; they feed the flock in His stead, 2 Cor. v. 20, and in His Spirit ; therefore not *αἰσχροκερδῶς*, but *προθυμῶς*, 1 Pet. v. 2. The property of their chief Shepherd, whose interest absorbs their life and energy, is in a certain sense their own property. The *τὸ ἐν ὑμῖν ποίμνιον τοῦ Θεοῦ* of 1 Pet. v. 2 seems to point to the internal connection between faithful

pastors and their flocks, as resting upon their connection with Christ. Accordingly, the flocks are spiritually bound up with or contained in the pastors, as these are in Christ; and hence in the Apocalypse we find the churches addressed in the persons of their official ministers, called angels. Whether a man is a true shepherd or a hireling, becomes palpably certain at the time of crisis and danger; but he who looks deeply will discover it before that by many symptoms. Instead of *τὰ πρόβατα* at the end of ver. 12, *αὐτά* might be the reading. But the employment of the noun gives more prominence to the fearful circumstance. Petty transcribers might have been puzzled by the fact that the pronoun comes first, and is then again followed by the noun: hence they have omitted either the *αὐτά* or the *τὰ πρόβατα*.—Christ, in that He did not, like a hireling, forsake the sheep in the presence of the wolf, and flee, presented Himself as the antitype of David; who, when he was tending his father's flock, did not retreat before the lion and the bear, but manfully opposed them, and delivered the sheep from their hands at the peril of his own life, 1 Sam. xvii. 35 seq.

Vers. 14, 15. “I am the good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine. As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down My life for the sheep.”—After Christ has distinguished Himself from the hireling, ver. 11 is resumed, with a parenthesis which gives the reason of His self-sacrifice: the tender relation of love, the internal fellowship, in which Jesus stands to His sheep, forms the foundation of the words, “I give My life for the sheep.” This relation is described by the terms knowing and being known; according to a phraseology which frequently occurs in the discourses of Jesus as recorded by the other Evangelists. In Matt. xxv. 12, the Lord says to the foolish virgins, *Oὐκ οἶδα ὑμᾶς, I know you not*; to those who merely cried Lord, Lord, in Matt. vii. 23, *Οὐδέποτε ἔγνων ὑμᾶς, I never knew you*. The present *τιθημι* is recalled by the reference to the *τιθησι* of ver. 11. And this was the more obvious, inasmuch as the sacrificial death of Christ was at that time approaching with swift steps.

Ver. 16. “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd.”—Rupert von Deutz rightly observes, that Jesus said this in order to intimate

that He did not stand in need of the Jews' faith; even if they did not believe, yet He had other sheep which He would bring into the same fold. He was richer than they thought. In Isa. xlix. 1-9, the calling of the Gentiles had been brought into close connection with the unbelief of the Jews. There the idea was, that the Lord would give to His servant the heathen for an inheritance, in compensation for rebellious Israel. In ver. 4 we read, "Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent My strength for nought, and in vain; yet surely My judgment is with the Lord, and My work with My God;" in vers. 5, 6, "And now, saith the Lord that formed Me from the womb to be His servant, to bring Jacob again to Him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and My God shall be My strength. And he said, It is a light thing that Thou shouldest be My servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the ends of the earth." And this point of view is all the more appropriate here, inasmuch as Jesus is speaking primarily to embittered enemies, who prided themselves on their unbelief, and thought that they would thereby baffle His schemes. The glance which our Lord throws, in the interval between the two announcements of the sacrifice of His life, upon the future conversion of the Gentiles, presupposes that this very sacrifice would be the means of their conversion. In ch. xi. 52, xii. 24, 32, also, we find the reception of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God placed in connection with the death of Christ as its cause. The "power" of which He speaks in Matt. xxviii. 19, and which He makes the basis of His command to the disciples to go and disciple all nations, He received as the reward of His sufferings. In Eph. ii. 13, the bringing nigh of the Gentiles who were once afar off, is said to be "through the blood of Christ." And in the prophecies of the Old Testament, the sufferings and death of the servant of God are represented as the efficient cause of the return of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God. According to Isa. lii. 13-15, all the peoples of the earth, and all their kings, are exhibited as reverently submitting to the servant of God on the ground of the redemption accomplished by Him. In ch. liii. 10-12 we read: "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him: when Thou shalt make

His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied: by His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong." That the death of Christ was something more than a mere calamitous event, than merely what He encountered in the way of His calling as a necessary infliction from the wrath of His enemies; that it had a propitiatory and substitutionary significance, is proved by these earlier passages of the Old Testament. But it is also explicitly contained in the present declaration of our Lord, who bases the reception of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God solely upon His own death. How can this be understood otherwise, than that by the death of Christ the hitherto closed way of access to the treasures of the mercy of God was opened?

*Sheep* are always, in the discourses of Christ, the faithful members of the kingdom of God, the company of believers. When the Redeemer here speaks of sheep existing among the Gentiles, we are not to think with Grotius of such as were of a gentle nature, and as might encourage the hope that they would not despise the proffered Gospel. The solemn word of Christ in ch. iii. 6 opposes any such view of the natural preparations of a portion of the Gentiles: "that which is born of the flesh is flesh." It ill accords with the picture given by the Apostles of the earlier conversation of the converted heathen, Eph. ii. 1 seq. (dead in trespasses and sins; by nature children of wrath), iv. 17; 1 Pet. i. 14, etc. Sheep they are called, not on account of any inherent fitness or preparation, but rather on account of the divine election, as *κατὰ τὴν ἐκλογὴν ἀγαπητού*, Rom. xi. 28, comp. Eph. i. 4, 5. In a strictly similar manner the Lord, Acts xviii. 10, says to St Paul in Corinth, "I have much people in this city." When it is asserted that "the other sheep are not the Gentile masses," the remark is correct; but it is equally true that the individual believers could be secured only through the masses having an entrance into the kingdom of God laid open to them. Instructive in this relation are the parables of the sower and the nets in Matt. xiii.; as also the parable in Matt. xxii. 1-14, which issues in the words, "Many are called, but few are chosen." According to ver. 10, there are "bad

and good" too in the Church which is to be gathered even from among the Gentiles. In that Church the Lord detects those who have not on the wedding garment. The analogy of the earlier economy leads to the conclusion that the kingdom of God under the new covenant will bear a mixed character. The great separation and sifting will take place only at the *συντέλεια τοῦ αἰώνος*, the end of the present dispensation.

Sheep from another fold are not spoken of ; but other sheep who are not of this fold. There is but *one* fold, *ἡ αὐλὴ τῶν προβάτων*, ver. 1, the kingdom of God, without any distinction between the Old Testament and the New. The Gentiles are introduced into a fold which had existed from Abraham's time. Those from among the Gentiles who are children of God by election, belong, ch. xi. 52, to the *dispersion*, which is placed in opposition to the fold, and are called out from that dispersion by Christ. According to Matt. viii. 11, many were to come from the east and the west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God. According to Rom. xi. 17, there is only one olive-tree into which the Gentiles are grafted. According to Eph. ii. 12, the Gentiles are admitted into the commonwealth of Israel, from which they had been previously excluded. The habitual doctrine of the Old Testament is that of one congregation or Church of God, one Israel, into which the Gentiles were to be adopted in the time of the Redeemer. Abraham, in Gen. xvii. 5, is termed the father of many Gentile nations. Zion is declared in Ps. lxxxvii. to be the birth-place of the peoples. The reception of the heathen into the fellowship of Israel is thus described by Isaiah, in ch. xliv. 5 : "One shall say, I am the Lord's ; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob ; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." In Isa. xix. 18, the converted Gentiles speak the language of Canaan. In Micah iv. 2, many Gentile nations say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob ; for the law shall go forth of Zion." In Zech. viii. 23, ten men of all the languages of the nations take hold of the skirt of one man that is a Jew, saying, "We will go with you ; for we have heard that God is with you."

The Lord has other sheep. The converts from among the Gentiles are His before they are converted. This right to the

heathen meets us in Ps. ii. 8 : there the Lord speaks to His Anointed : “ Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession.” — “ Them also must I bring : ” that is, into this fold ; and, as Bengel rightly supplements from the context, “ through My death : ” comp. ch. xi. 52. Many explain, “ bring or *lead* as the shepherd, who goes before the sheep that follow, ver. 4.” But then there would not be *one* flock. Nor must we forget, “ they shall hear My voice : ” He bringeth them ; for He calleth them to come into the fold ; they hear His voice, and there is but one fold and one Shepherd. The interpretation *bring* is supported also by ch. xi. 52 : the *συνάγειν εἰς ἐν* there corresponds to the *ἀγεῖν* here. If they are *brought* into the fold, they are also brought together into one. The fold is the place of congregation. The *δεῖ*, *must*, points to the Divine counsel ; which we must not hesitate to accept here, inasmuch as it was manifestly exhibited in the prediction of the Old Testament.

“ And there shall be one fold, one Shepherd,” Bengel : Hæc unitas gregis, hæc unitas pastoris cœpit postquam bonus pastor animam suam posuit. The original scriptures are Ezek. xxxiv. 23 : “ And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even My servant David ; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd ; ” and Ezek. xxxvii. 22, 24 : “ And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel ; and one king shall be king to them all : and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all. And David My servant shall be king over them ; and they all shall have one shepherd : they shall also walk in My judgments, and observe My statutes, and do them.” These passages primarily refer to the abolition of the distinction between Israel and Judah, the union of both under Christ the good Shepherd ; but that is only the special application of the universal truth, that the Redeemer of the future, the great Son of David, would seek all that was lost, and unite again all that had been divided. The Saviour does not arbitrarily enlarge the sense of those sayings ; but He gives them a theological interpretation, while He carries back the specific meaning to its universal ground.

Vers. 17, 18. “ Therefore doth My Father love Me, because

I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father."—The Jews thought they had Jesus in their own power. That their attempt on Him was so easily successful, might naturally be perverted into a proof that His assertion of an internal union with the Father was based upon nothing but presumption. Jesus opens to them another aspect of the matter. In spite of their seeming independence, Christ shows that they were only passive instruments of His own will. His death He fore-announces as that of a voluntary self-sacrifice for the salvation of the world. It did not disturb His relation to the Father, but was rather the outflow of that relation. The declaration to Pilate, in ch. xix. 11, proceeds from the same ground as that of the present declaration of Christ. That which Pilate thought, "I have power to crucify thee," the Jews on the present occasion thought also. And it is in perfect accordance with the present utterance, that Jesus, in ch. xviii., before He permitted Himself to be taken, demonstrated by an actual and visible proof that He could, if He pleased, deliver Himself from His enemies; as also that upon the cross, when He both willed and knew the fulfilment of all things, He surrendered up His spirit into the hands of the Father, ch. xix. 30. But the expression we now consider had also another meaning; it was designed for the assurance and consolation of the disciples in the temptation which the death of Christ would bring to their faith: He would not die an enforced death, but offer Himself up voluntarily for the salvation of the flock.

"Therefore My Father loveth Me:" love was the opposite of that wrath of God, of which the Jews regarded Christ's death as the proof and sign. "In connection with the *therefore*," says Anton, "we must observe what Isaiah says about the pleasure of the Lord prospering in His servant's hands, because of the offering of His soul." In ch. liii. 10 we read: "When His soul shall make an offering, He shall see His seed." And especially ver. 12, where, after the prediction of the glorious and divine recompense, it is said to be "because He hath poured out His soul unto death."

"That I might take it again:" this is the design of the

sacrifice. Jesus dies not simply in order to die, but that He might rise again and found His kingdom upon the earth : comp. ver. 16, xii. 24. The object of the Divine love was not the death of Christ in itself, but the death which He voluntarily underwent to this end. Augustin says, on the laying it down : *Ego illam pono* : non glorientur Judæi, sævire potuerunt, potestatem habere non potuerunt. '*Ἐξουσία*' is not authority here, but power, as in ch. xix. 10 ; Luke xxii. 53. The signification of an authority derived from another is not in the word itself, so much as in the word interpreted by the context. The context does not here give it such a meaning. The *ἐξουσίαν ἔχω* is immediately connected with the *ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ*. But this absolute independence is not asserted as in the presence of the Father ; but only in view of those who would take away the life of Jesus. This "commandment :"—to lay down My life, and to take it again.

Vers. 19-21. "There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad ; why hear ye him ? Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil : can a devil open the eyes of the blind ?"—Here we have the issue and compendium of the whole section from ch. ix. 1. The narrative of the healing of the man born blind explains it all ; and to this fact the last words refer. *Πάλιν* points back to ch. ix. 16. There is no reason for limiting the Jews here merely to the Pharisees. It is not in itself probable that the present multitude consisted only of that party. The greater number were offended at Christ's words. "They were," says Anton, "words such as entered into the heart of the Israelite theology ; but they were words such as had retained nothing of that theology but the outward form, and therefore they understood them not." *Δαιμόνιον ἔχει* (ch. vii. 20, viii. 48), and *μαίνεται*, *He hath a devil, and is mad*, are related as cause and effect. That they really meant possession by a devil, is proved by the following words, "Can a devil ?" etc. But here, as ordinarily, there were found such as laid the words of Christ to heart, moved by the observation of the work which formed the starting-point of these words. They clung at first to a merely negative judgment, but there was more in the background. "Jam istorum oculi cœperant aperiri," says Augustin.

## CHAP. X. 22-39.

## AT THE FEAST OF DEDICATION.

Vers. 22, 23. "And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch."—Jesus remained at Jerusalem during the interval between the Feast of Tabernacles and the Feast of Dedication. The last of the three events which are recorded of that period, ch. ix. 1-x. 21, falls probably into the time immediately preceding the latter feast. For Jesus in ver. 26 refers to the words which had then been spoken, and takes it for granted that they were still fresh in the hearers' remembrance. The Septuagint translates by ἐγκαίνια the Heb. חנוכָה, used in Ps. xxx. 1, Ezra vi. 16, 17, concerning the dedication of the temple. The present feast can be regarded only as the commemoration of the "Restoration of the Altar," and the "Cleaning of the Temple," under Judas the Maccabee, the institution of which is recorded in 1 Macc. iv. 52, 2 Macc. x. 5-8; for this is the only feast occurring on the 25th Casleu or December, which suits the winter season. The Feast of Dedication was not limited to the metropolis, but was celebrated in the whole land. But Jesus fell in with the festival at Jerusalem, because He was staying there at the time. The remark, "and it was winter," was made for extra-Palestine readers, who were but little acquainted with the feasts, in order to give the reason why Jesus walked in Solomon's porch, and not under the open sky. Vitruvius thus explains the design of vestibules in public buildings, L. v. c. 9: Post scenam porticus sunt constituae, uti cum imber repente ludos interpellaverint, habeat populus quo se recipiat ex theatro. In Ezra x. 13 we read, with reference to this season: "It is a time of much rain, and we are not able to stand without." How stormy and cold the weather often is in Jerusalem during December, the references of Bertheau on Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther amply show; as also Kuhn's treatise on the variations of temperature in Jerusalem. The porch of Solomon is mentioned again in Acts iii. 11, v. 12; and in Joseph. Bell. Jud. v. 5, 1; Arch. xx. 9, 7. According to the latter, it was the only porch built by Solomon himself,

the others having been added afterwards. This porch had undergone much dilapidation ; and a restoration, proposed under Claudius, was not carried into effect only because of the expense. But what Josephus says concerning its structure, makes it plain that the Chaldeans never became absolute masters of the building, and that it continued to stand essentially the same as in the time of its founder.

Ver. 24. “Then came the Jews round about Him, and said unto Him, How long dost thou make us to doubt ? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.”—It is characteristic of their urgent and passionate temperament, that the Jews thus surrounded Christ. They were determined that He should give an account of Himself ; the matter must come to some conclusion, and they would not let Him go until they had gained their end. “How long,” they say, “dost thou lift up our soul ?” Much arbitrary comment has been expended on the *aἴρεις*. “The helpless *tollis* of the Vulgate” (Stier) maintains its right in opposition to all modern attempts at different interpretation : *suspensam tenes*, holdest us in suspense, as appears plain from the fact that *aἴρω* (comp. ch. i. 29) in St John never means anything but *tollere*. That affection may be regarded as lifting up or suspension of the soul. The corresponding Hebrew phrase, שָׁנָא נְפָא, lift up the soul, occurs for all the manifold forms of passionate excitement : for inspiration, in Ex. xxxv. 21, “And they brought the Lord’s offering to the work of the tabernacle, every one whose heart stirred him up ;” for violent desire, Deut. xxiv. 15, “Thou shalt give him his hire ; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it ;” of swelling pride, Hos. iv. 8, and 2 Chron. xxv. 19, “And thine heart lifteth thee up to boast ;” in Prov. xix. 18, of the outburst of wrath, “Chasten thy son while there is hope, but let not thy soul rise to put him to death.” Aquila : πρὸς τὸ θανατῶσαι αὐτὸν μὴ ἄρης ψυχήν σου. So the same phrase of lifting the soul is used in classical Greek to describe passionate excitement. Thus of violent pain, in Soph. Ædip. v. 914, ὑψοῖ γὰρ αἴρει θύμον Οἰδίπους λύπαισι παντολαισι ; of enthusiasm, in Eurip. Iphig. ὑψηλόφρων μοὶ θυμὸς αἴρεται πρόσωπον ; of lively joy, in Plut. Fabio, p. 1796 : ὅτε δῆμος ἡρτο καὶ μετὰ χαρᾶς εἰς ἀγορὰν συνέτρεχε. Libanius speaks of discourses by which the soul *aἴρεται*, and of those by which it *καθέλκεται*. Thus here the Jews want to be at rest, to be delivered from the torment

of passionate excitement and suspense. "Tell us plainly," they say, "if thou be the Christ:" they want more than the mere naked and dry utterance; Christ must tell them in such a manner as shall go to their hearts, and remove all their doubts. According to the current notion of this text, the question of the Jews was a hypocritical one, and their conduct was shaped towards the design of entangling the Lord in some imprudent declaration which might afford them ground of accusation. But the excited character of the whole scene is opposed to the idea of an insidious design; and the manner in which Christ answers them fails in such a case of any satisfactory explanation; for the words of vers. 27, etc., in particular, must then appear to be no other than pearls cast before swine. We have not embodied logical consistency to deal with here (we cannot object to their question as to who Jesus was, the fact that in ch. viii. 13 they said, "Thou bearest witness of thyself, thy witness is not true"), but simply men among men. There is more frequently found in relation to Christ a double feeling—weak inclination of faith combining with decided repugnance—than direct and utter enmity. Among the Jews such a double feeling was constantly exhibited. It must have been, on the one hand, exceedingly hard for them absolutely to renounce Christ. In Him, the dearest hope, the very soul, of their national life had come extremely near to them. "Shall I crucify your king?" and, "Will ye that I release unto you the king of the Jews?" were questions by which Pilate hoped to make an impression upon them. If they gave up Christ, their longed-for earthly dominion retired to an unlimited distance. But while they were in this sense favourably disposed to Him, they were, on the other hand, all the more vehemently excited against Him by the same fact. The new birth, renunciation of all that they had, was the hard task to which they were always set: comp. Phil. iii. 7, 8. Everything was at that time pervaded by Pharisaism, as now by Rationalism and Naturalism. If they turned to Christ, all their knowledge, and all that they prided themselves upon, was turned into a pitiful nonentity. The reason which prevented their deciding this severe internal conflict, was sought by them not in themselves, where it should have been sought, but in Christ. The Berlenb. Bible shows here a better psychology than the prevalent interpretation: "They felt some-

thing in their souls that made them uneasy; and although in ver. 20 they seemed to have got rid of it, their boldness soon passed entirely away: for there was yet an arrow in their soul. Whence we may see what kind of an assurance they already have of the matter. The truth becomes a burden to the people, which they seek to throw off, but cannot. But so great is the perversion and the falseness of men, that they cast the blame on God, and represent it as if He kept them back by such and such defect from assurance."

Vers. 25, 26. "Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me: but ye believe not; because ye are not of My sheep, as I said unto you."—"I told you," that is, "that I am Christ;" for that was the question involved. Jesus had told them in the most manifold manner, and most plainly a short time before, in ch. x. 1 seq. There He had declared Himself to be the great and good Shepherd of Israel, the door of the sheep, the giver of salvation. But the Jews had received more than they desired. Christ had not merely told them that He was the Christ; He had demonstrated it by His *works* (comp. on ch. v. 36, upon the reference to the works). The blame, therefore, could not attach to Jesus; it falls back upon the Jews themselves. "Of My sheep" means essentially "of My believers." Their not believing was the active evidence of the condition which is described by the expression, "not being of Christ's sheep." They do not believe, and cannot believe, because they are simply not believers. All that Christ said to them, and all that He did before their eyes to challenge their faith, was said and done in vain. The condition of unbelief resisted all influence like a wall of brass.

"As I said unto you," must belong to ver. 26. If it is connected with what follows, we cannot tell how far the quotation extends. Ver. 28 is inseparably bound to ver. 27; but in that verse we find something that did not occur in the Lord's words just recorded by St John. The error that connects it with the succeeding verses has been occasioned by the too literal acceptance of "as I said unto you," and the not finding "ye are not of My sheep" in the previous discourse. The same reason will account for the omission in many MSS. and critical recensions. But it may also be explained on internal grounds. Bengel:

Saltus ab  $\epsilon\mu\omega\nu$  ad  $\mu\nu$ . In what sense Christ had said this to them, appears more plainly as we read on. He had, in ch. x. 3, 4, 5, 14, described the characteristics of His own sheep, in opposition to the Pharisaically-minded portion of the people. And underneath the whole description there lay a series of negations: those who hear not the voice of Christ, who knew it not, by whom He is not known, who follow strangers,—these cannot be His sheep. That discourse, probably uttered a short time before, had made a deep impression upon them, and was still in the remembrance of all.

Vers. 27–30. Jesus, after He had, doubtless in the gentlest tone, repelled their complaint, begins to attract them, that they might come out of the miserable condition in which they were then found. Taking up the “ye are not of My sheep,” He describes to them first of what kind His sheep are, and then places before their eyes the high reward which they will receive as the result of this their nature, and of their unreserved self-devotion to Christ and affiance in Him. Nothing less is here concerned than the eternal salvation which they receive as an indestructible good from the hand of Him who is absolutely one with the Father. But we must not dwell exclusively on the design to attract. Jesus at the same time intimates that whatever the Jews—refusing to be drawn by the allusion to the blessed relation between Him, the good Shepherd, and His sheep—might endeavour to do to hurt those sheep, to thwart the development of the germ of His Church, would be vain; that they might indeed rob themselves of the blessedness prepared for His people, but should never have power to pluck any of them from that sacred fellowship.

Vers. 27, 28. “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand.”—Lücke finds, in ver. 27, the “contrast between sheep that follow and sheep that do not follow.” But there are no other sheep than the sheep of Christ. Those who are not His sheep, are goats and wolves. Such is the uniform phraseology of Christ: not only in St John, but also in the other Evangelists: comp. Matt. vii. 15, x. 16, xxv. 32. To the three members which describe the internal relation subsisting between Christ and His sheep, there correspond in ver. 28 three mem-

bers which describe the benefits imparted to them by the good Shepherd. The “eternal life” has in this word its prelude; it is obtained at the instant of believing, although its full realization is reserved for hereafter: comp. on ch. iii. 15, v. 24, vi. 40. Underneath the “they shall never perish,” there lies a severe denunciation on the Jews, if they remain Jews. Augustin: Subaudis tanquam eis dixerit: vos peribitis in æternum, quia non estis ex ovibus meis. The words, “and none shall pluck them out of My hand,” rest upon Deut. xxxii. 39, where Jehovah says, “I wound and I heal, neither is there any that can pluck out of My hand.” Knobel’s translation (and the Eng. Vers.), “and there is none that can *deliver* out of My hand,” does not agree with the immediately preceding “I heal,” nor does the following clause suit that translation. As the following promise is connected by בַּיִת, the clause cannot be a one-sided denunciation, but must, like the rest, be consolatory. הָצֵל does not mean *save*, but *wrest* or *pluck*, ἀρπάζειν: comp. 2 Sam. xiv. 6; Hos. ii. 11; Gen. xxxi. 9, 16. When deliverance is the meaning, it is the context that imparts it. אֵין מְצֵל never means “there is none to deliver,” but always “there is none who may pluck.” Thus it may be both threatening and promissory: of plucking either out of the punishing hand (Job x. 7), or out of the protecting hand of God. Accordingly, the meaning in Deut. xxxii. 39 is this: “When I heal, and when I kill, there is no man who wresteth out of My hand. If I therefore will to save, no man is there who can prevent it.” A second original passage is Isa. xlivi. 13: “Yea, before the day was, I am He; and there is none who can deliver out of My hand: I will work, and who shall let it?” Here also the phrase is promissory. No man can pluck the saved of God out of His hand. Jesus assumes to Himself that which in the original passage is attributed to Jehovah by Himself. And this would be blasphemy were He not by unity of nature one with the supreme God, who giveth not His honour to another. Τίς embraces in itself all hostile powers. The consolatory utterance of Christ loses much of its significance, if we suppose Him not to have included a reference to the greatest peril which threatens a believer, to that which most of all troubles him, his own sinfulness. Happily there is no reason for any such exclusion; and experience shows that it is in this very domain that the truth

of our Lord's declaration is most gloriously confirmed. To the men of honest will (ch. vii. 17), to those in whom the fundamental bias of the will is to do the will of God, eternal love in this passage assures forgiveness of all sins of infirmity, defence against wilful and presumptuous sins, and guarantee against anything beyond mere human temptation, 1 Cor. x. 13. The sins of those in whom the fundamental tendency is sound, so far from disturbing their relation to Christ, must, under His protecting care, serve only to ratify and strengthen that relation. It is a cold consolation to say, "If and so long as they remain My sheep, they are secure." The whole strength of our soul's desire is for "a guarantee against ourselves." That there is here such a guarantee, is assured to us by the reference of the words themselves to the circumstances which gave rise to them. Ch. x. 12 shows that, by the thieves, we are primarily to understand the Pharisees, or the Judaism opposed to Christ. The Pharisee is the wolf, who comes to rob and to destroy the flock. In the words, "no man can pluck them out of My hand," there is a denunciation of that which the "synagogue of Satan" (Rev. ii. 9) were at that time doing to suppress the developing Christian Church. How diligently they sought to sunder the members of Christ from His cause, is testified by the Epistle to the Hebrews; indeed it had just been exhibited in the conduct of the Jews towards the man born blind, whom they sought to detach from Christ. And from this situation of things, which the Lord had before His eyes when He spoke, it becomes very plain that the "guarantee against ourselves" is not to be excluded, but rather that it is the main thing here. The Jews could only then pluck Christ's sheep out of His hand, if they themselves became inwardly weary, and failed in their faith, Luke xxii. 32. Against this most dangerous internal enemy, our Lord gives His sheep the promise of effectual help.

Ver. 29. "My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all ; and none is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand."—Jesus stood before them as the Son of man. The assertion that no man could have power to pluck His own out of His hand, might naturally seem to them ridiculous presumption. Jesus therefore points to an acknowledged power behind His own—that of His Father. His Father gave Him His sheep, and He would also maintain their union with Him, and defend it. To

pluck them out of His hand, would be to make war against the Omnipotent. Greater “than all,”—that is, than all who might attempt to wrest them out of My hand. It would be mere senseless folly to include Christ Himself in the “all.” Nothing in the context suits with a subordination of Christ, but all tends to His equality with the Father. The Vulgate translates : quod mihi dedit pater meus, majus est omnibus, following the reading, ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ δέδωκε μοι μεῖζον πάντων ἔστι: ὁ δέδωκε μοι is introduced from ch. vi. 39. This mistake drew the *μεῖζον* after it. To regard this latter as the original reading, would be justifiable only if we found it in any codices without the *ὁ δέδωκε*. There is also something unusual in the neuter, as if something greater—a higher energy. Since the Lord had been speaking of hostile persons, and not of hostile powers, it is strictly appropriate that God should confront them as a person.

Ver. 30. “I and My Father are one.”—In the contest with the Arians, this expression of Christ formed the centre of orthodox argument. It was with perfect propriety made available as a proof of the unity of essence between Christ and the Father. Ver. 29 would be a complete justification of the “no man can pluck them out of My hand,” only on the supposition that Christ is in the fullest and most real sense the Son of God. Christ in these words—especially as compared with their originals in the Old Testament—arrogated to Himself a power far transcending everything human. It was most essential that Jesus should make it emphatic, that when He called God His Father, He meant it in the truest and deepest sense ; and all the more as, in the phraseology of the Old Testament, sonship to God often occurs with a subordinate meaning, merely with reference to a love like that between a father and a son. Thus Israel, for example, is often termed a son of God. In order to shut out all such lower notions, it is said here, “We are one ;” so that no other distinction exists between us than that of the Father and the Son ; there is a common participation in the one Godhead. Every other and restricting view is excluded by the fact that Jesus had long ago lain under the accusation of making Himself equal to God, ch. v. 18. With this accusation current, Jesus could not have made a declaration which must necessarily be misinterpreted by His enemies. The Jews found

in that which Jesus here said of Himself an actual blasphemy. If they were under a misapprehension, the fault lay with Him. Nor could Jesus have asserted such a claim in view of the misunderstandings which would certainly spring up in Christendom, if He had not intended to arrogate to Himself a full participation in the divinity.

If these words are referred simply to the unity of sentiment—with the Socinians, and, alas, Calvin<sup>1</sup> also, here unfaithful to himself—Christ would be made here at the close to descend from the height to which He had raised Himself in vers. 28 and 29. In ver. 28 He had uttered the lofty word, “No man can pluck them out of My hand.” In ver. 29 He had called God His Father; which must be understood in the deepest sense, if we are to regard ver. 29 as justifying that bold word of ver. 28, which no mere servant of God in His kingdom, not even Moses, would have dared to speak. The “I and My Father are one” would then be a sudden fall; while we expect at the close a climax. This the Jews rightly understood, whose misunderstandings elsewhere, as referred to in this argument, are always *spiritual*, and who in the *spiritual* matters, which are concerned here, usually retained the keenness of apprehension peculiar to their people. By limiting the words to a unity of *authority* nothing is gained, since that would have a unity of nature as its basis. But there is no real foundation for this. Certainly the authority of Christ does come into special consideration; but that authority is all the more abundantly confirmed, when it is referred back to His unity with the Father as its basis. The argument for this restriction of the meaning, as derived by Lücke from the context,—“Jesus speaks here of His power to defend all faithful souls against every danger; but when He lays down the foundation of this, that He and the Father are one, this unity can be no other than the unity of authority,”—does not rest upon a correct apprehension of that context. Jesus is not primarily establishing His authority, but declaring in what sense He had called God His Father. The limitation to a unity of authority is opposed also by ver. 28.

<sup>1</sup> Neque enim Christus de unitate substantiae disputat, sed de consensu, quem cum patre habet, quidquid scil. geritur a Christo, Patris virtute confirmatum iri.

The unity with God, in the deepest sense of the term, can be all the less explained away, inasmuch as the Old Testament declares the same of the Messiah. Especially important is the passage, Zech. xiii. 7, where the supreme God describes His Shepherd, the Messiah, as "His fellow," as united with Himself in a secret unity of nature (comp. my Christology on this passage); also ch. xii. 10, "And they shall look on Him whom they pierced," according to which the Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth, was pierced in the Messiah's person; and ch. xi. 13, where Jehovah terms the wretched recompense which was given to the good Shepherd, the Messiah, the goodly price which was put upon Him who in the person of the Shepherd had come to His own inheritance.—The proper parallels of our present text are ch. xvi. 15, xvii. 10, passages which entirely shut out all reference to unity of sentiment, in their loving and protecting designs with regard to the sheep. Such passages as ch. xvii. 11, "that they may be one, as we are," vers. 21, 22, ought not to be appealed to for the purpose of depriving the unity between Christ and the Father of its deeper meaning. From the imperfection of the copy—in which, however, there is more than mere concord of sentiment, for our unity has a real ground in our common participation of the Holy Ghost—we are not at liberty to conclude the similar imperfection of the pattern. Else we must infer from Matt. v. 48, that the perfection of God Himself is only a relative perfection. "The entire Christian religion," says Quesnel, "is built on this immovable foundation, that He who has undertaken to save us and to lead us back to God is God equal with the Father, although as a Person He is truly distinguished from the Father. It is our duty to adore these truths, to exercise ourselves unto a sound faith in them, to thank Jesus Christ, for that He, who was one with the Father from all eternity, has condescended to come down and be one with us—that is, to be man with us for ever." The Fathers rightly observed that the permanent distinction of the persons in the unity of the nature is established, not only by "I and the Father," but also by the plural of the verb, and the *εν*, not *εις*: comp. ch. xvii. 22.

Ver. 31. "Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him."—Here it becomes abundantly plain, that the ground of their unbelief was not any want of clearness in Christ's decla-

rations concerning His own person. Now that He once more tells them plainly and piercingly who He is, they desire to stone Him. If Jesus were not God's Son in the highest sense, and most absolutely partaker of the divinity, the Jews acted rightly. The obligation was laid upon them by Lev. xxiv. 10, etc., to stone all blasphemers. But it could be nothing less than blasphemy, for a mortal man to lay claim to the honour belonging only to God. *Πάλιν* refers back to ch. viii. 59. *Βαστάζειν* is translated in the Vulgate by *sustulerunt*; but it means throughout the New Testament simply to bear. The question here is not of a formal judicial stoning, but of an act of theocratical popular justice. It was not the people's purpose to put Jesus at once to death by stoning,—that would have been an invasion of the rights of the rulers,—but only to act a kind of prelude to the sentence which the rulers must pronounce. This, as it were, symbolical character of their act, explains how it was that the Jews did not proceed to extremities. The mere carrying of the stones expressed their meaning.

Ver. 32. “Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from My Father; for which of those works do ye stone Me?”—Jesus *answers* the symbolical words of the Jews, silently uttered by the preparations for stoning. He had demonstrated by His works the truth of His claim to be the Son of God. Therefore, when the Jews would stone Him on account of that claim, it was no other than if they would stone Him on account of the works themselves, which could not possibly be sundered from that claim. To turn themselves against these works of goodness was to fall under the condemnation of Deut. xxxii. 6, etc., and Micah vi. 3. “Many excellent works:” St John has recorded only one. Then we see here that his Gospel presupposes other Gospels which enter into the details of those “excellent works” to which Christ in St John attaches so much importance. “I have shown you:” Jesus alludes to Ps. lxxviii. 11, 12: “And they forgat His works and His wonders that He had showed them (LXX. : ἐδειξεν αὐτοῖς). Marvellous things did He in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan.” Jesus had given them the same demonstrations which Jehovah gave to their fathers. “From My Father.” Meyer: “Who is in Me, and from whom, therefore,

they proceed through Me." "For which of these works among you." Every single work protested loudly against the act of the Jews, and declared it to be blasphemy. "Do ye stone Me?" This was as good as done; for the energetic will to do is as the deed itself. Inwardly they had already accomplished it.

Ver. 33. "The Jews answered Him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God."—The Jews separate things that were inseparable,—the works, and the words resting upon the works. Calvin rightly observes: *Et vera erat hæc blasphemiae definitio, si nihil aliud quam homo fuisse Christus; tantum in eo peccant, quod Divinitatem, quæ in miraculis conspicua erat, cernere non dignantur.* "God" without the article denotes the generic idea—God in opposition to men and angels. Θεόν is like ἵστον τῷ Θεῷ in ch. v. 18. There, ὁ Θεός with the article is definitely the supreme God in person. "Can we wonder," says Quesnel, "that the surest truths from the lips of men are often held for error, when we see that Jesus Christ was treated as a blasphemer, because He announced truths which were approved by the power of the Spirit in Him, and confirmed by many miracles?"

In the answer to the accusation of the Jews in vers. 34–38, "Jesus repels the charge of wickedness brought against Him, not by denying that He was the Son of God, but by proving that He had spoken what was true" (Calvin). The Jews took offence, not so much at the idea of a God-man generally, as at the fact that the claim to be the Son of God was specifically put forth by Christ, whose yoke they were bent on not taking on themselves. Accordingly, what is laid down in vers. 34–36 can have only the significance of an introduction: the proper demonstration follows in vers. 37, 38. But it was intended to make their minds susceptible of receiving this demonstration, by previously showing, that a rigid dualism between God and man into which they were sure to fall, if they were absolutely bent on throwing off the claims of *this* God-man, was not supported by Scripture, but opposed by it: in fact, that the incarnation of God was in Scripture already pretypified.

Ver. 34. "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?"—The passage quoted is Ps. lxxxii. 6:

“I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the Most High.” The name of *the law* belonged originally only to the books of Moses; but it was extended also to the remaining books of the Old Testament, not, as is generally assumed, *à posteriori*, but because these books shared with the law its normative or regulative meaning, 2 Tim. iii. 16. That this was the true reason, appears from the consideration that, wherever this designation occurs, the reference to canonical dignity approves itself as the writer’s scope: comp. ch. xii. 34, xv. 25; Rom. iii. 19. That the Psalms are *here* quoted designedly, and in the sense indicated, under this formula, is shown by the addition of *ἐμῶν*: “in your *Psalms*” would not have been appropriate. To “in your law” corresponds “the Scripture cannot be broken,” in ver. 35. Both point to the fact that the Jews could not evade this inviolable authority. There are in the Psalms themselves the basis of such a designation. Their writers assume, equally with Moses, the inspiration of their own words, and the obligatory, regulative character of those words as resting upon their inspiration. To quote only one instance: Asaph, in Ps. lxxviii. 1, terms the words of his mouth “his law,” because he is conscious that the supreme Lawgiver speaks by his lips, even as He spoke by Moses. In Ps. 1. he introduces this supreme Lawgiver, as formerly, upon Mount Sinai, and represents Him as speaking throughout the Psalm; in order to show that the restoration of the true meaning of the misunderstood law was no less the work of God, and therefore no less absolutely obligatory, than the first giving of that law. In Ps. xlix. 4, the writer says, in the consciousness that a higher Spirit than his own speaks through him, and accordingly gives his words an authoritative character: “My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart is understanding:” properly, wisdoms and insights, the double plural intimating that here wisdom and understanding are meant in their highest power, as they could not grow on human soil. In ver. 5 he says, “I will incline mine ear to a parable,” and shows himself thereby to be a mere receiver of a communication given from above, as a mere “hearer of the word of God,” Num. xxiv. 4. In Ps. cx. 1, “The Lord said,” beginning the psalm, indicates that it has the character of a *law*, which leaves but one alternative—obedience and punishment. The Proverbs also, no less than the

Psalms, arrogate the dignity of law. In ch. iii. 1, Wisdom says : " My son, forget not my law, and let thine heart keep my commandments :" comp. vers. 4, 2. In regard to the prophets we may compare Isa. i. 10.

" *In your law :*" the law, the obligatory character of which ye admit : comp. chap. viii. 17. The Jews were to be convinced out of the law, and therefore it is only the law's authority over them that is asserted. That Jesus also admitted its authority, is abundantly proved by His making it valid. The assertion of Rothe (S. and K. 60), that Jesus mentioned the law as altogether belonging to the Jews in opposition to Himself, makes Jesus contradict His own words, and is confuted by the whole relation sustained by Him to the law : comp. e.g. Matt. v. 17 seq. ; John v. 39, 45 seq.—The " I have said " refers to certain generally acknowledged expressions, in which the magistracy, and specifically the judges, were designated by the name of Elohim. These passages are found in the books of Moses. The divinity in these books is communicative : not wrapped up in itself, not asserting itself in absolute transcendency against the sublunary world. Their very first section teaches us that God created men in His own image, and appointed them to be His representative upon earth. But in the Mosaic laws those especially whose office it was to rule and to judge—all to whom in any relation reverence and respect belonged—were sanctified as representatives of God upon earth (Lampe : *In quâcunque potestate terrenâ divinæ majestatis quædam umbra est*). The commandment to honour parents, which belongs to the first table, has this for its foundation. God is to be honoured not only in Himself, but also in all who are placed over others : these being represented by the first of them all, our parents. On the basis of this commandment is erected the injunction of reverence to the aged, Lev. xix. 32, and that in Ex. xxii. 27, which requires that in all rulers men should recognise the reflection of the majesty of God. But especially in the Judges, the people were instructed to look at the great divine fact that underlay the human appearance : judgment belongs to God, Deut. i. 17 ; and he who stands before the judgment-seat stands before God, Ex. xxi. 6, xxii. 7, 8. These are the expressions which the Psalmist had in view. But he goes beyond those sayings, inasmuch as, while in them the name Elohim, God, is

attributed only to the judicial authority, generally as representing God, in the Psalm the words, “He judgeth in the midst of the gods,” and the present one, “I have said, Ye are gods,” attribute the name to the individual judicial persons. This is the reason why our Lord here did not quote against the Jews the original passages of the law, but those of the Psalmist resting upon them and expressly referring to them. Jesus had, as an individual, arrogated to Himself Divine dignity. The accusation ran, Thou makest thyself God. On the contrary, Jesus proves that the Scripture also terms individual men gods. But though He only appeals to the passage of the Psalm, the Mosaic passages are in the background. The argument was pertinently adapted to overthrow that naked dualism between God and man, in which the Pharisaic opposition would obviously seek its argument against the God-man, who now confronted them, and was so hateful to their minds. Berlenb. Bible : “In regard to the Messiah’s office, all offices upon earth were only shadows ; and yet the men in these offices are called gods. Thus from the beginning God purposed to teach your people to think further.” Lücke rightly observes : “The more learned commencement of the defence presupposes that the opponents here were not a mere raging mob, but that the Pharisees at least stood in the foreground.”

Vers. 35, 36. “If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken ; say ye of Him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest ; because I said, I am the Son of God ?”—Anton : “If it was not blasphemy for those who by nature were no more than men, how could it be blasphemy for Him who was something other than man ?” *Eἰπε* : that is, according to some, the *law*, that is, the passage in the Psalm ; better, however, God in the Psalm. For *εἰπε* resumes the *εἰπα*. The “word of God” is that before them in the Psalm, lxxxii. 6, which in its present form belongs only to the Psalmist, but in its substance goes back to the Pentateuch. The words, “and the scripture cannot be broken,” serve to place in full light the demonstrative power of the argument. If it undeniably was thus written in the Scripture, the Jews could not evade the recognition of it. For they would not be so ungodly as to wish to maintain that the Scripture could be broken, with which all

would be dissolved. He who should think of overturning or lessening the authority of Scripture, would place himself beyond the domain of God and His kingdom. "The Scripture" can only designate the then extant canon of the Old Testament. It is a settled truth, that its contents strictly coincide with that which to the present day remains the canon of the Old Testament. *Λύειν* here is, like *ἀκυροῦν* in Matt. xv. 6, to make invalid. We break or relax the Scripture when we invalidate, by word or act, that which it contains: comp. ch. v. 18, vii. 23; Matt. v. 19. Matt. v. 18 is strictly parallel in substance: "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." True that here the law in its stricter sense is primarily referred to. But in ver. 34 Jesus had already placed the remaining scripture on a level with the law, in relation to its absolutely authoritative meaning, quoting, as He did, the Psalms as the law. Essentially parallel, also, is Matt. xxii. 43: "How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord?" For the inspiration which Jesus there attributes to the Psalms, and therefore generally to holy Scripture,—our Lord's "It is written" shows that the Psalms are viewed only as a portion of the whole,—has for its necessary consequence the not being capable of being broken. Men may contend whether "the scripture cannot be broken" excludes petty flaws in purely external things. But "individual, geographical, and chronological details" are not, in fact, concerned in the controversies of the present time. They are only put forward in order to give room for a far more essential and vital difference with holy writ. But it is impossible that the Lord should have more definitely rejected this than He has. He appeals to the inviolability of Scripture, not in relation to a fundamental doctrine, but in a subordinate manner, with reference to a mere form of expression, and further in relation to a species of Scripture, in which, by the nature of the case, the subjective must predominantly rule. If the declaration, "the scripture cannot be broken," holds good of the Psalms, how much more so in reference to Moses and the Prophets? It cannot for a moment be doubted, that the Scripture is broken by those who, for example, assert that the Psalms breathe the spirit of revenge—that the Song of Solomon is a common Oriental love-song—that there are in the Prophets

predictions never to be fulfilled ; or by those who deny the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, which is the foundation of its inspiration, and who specifically declare that the book of Deuteronomy came not from the hand of Moses, although it always professes to be his—the alternative clearly being, that either Moses was the author, or a deceiver who abused the name of Moses. Such assertions as that this was merely an *argumentatio ad hominem*, Jesus speaking from the standing-point of His opponents, or that the inviolability here alleged referred not to the Scripture, but to the revelation incorporated with it (Rothe), are mere evasions. That “the scripture cannot be broken” presupposes the inspiration of the Scripture, is, for all who will see, perfectly clear.

By the sanctifying and sending into the world, the nature of Christ is only very imperfectly described. The sanctifying marks a separation to the service of God in His kingdom : comp. with Jer. i. 5, “Before thou camest forth of the womb, I *sanctified* thee,” Rom. i. 1 ; and Gal. i. 15, “God, who *separated* me from my mother’s womb.” The ἡγίαστε of itself does not point to the peculiar dignity of a mission. It is used of those ministers of the Divine counsel who unconsciously fulfilled their mission. In Isa. xiii. 3 it is used of the Medes, who were to bring to an end the Chaldaean dominion : “I have commanded My sanctified ones.” Certainly there is more significance in “and sent into the world.” That could not have been spoken of man : it presupposes the pre-existent heavenly existence (comp. on ch. i. 9) ; but this phrase does not strictly separate between the mission of Christ and that of angels. All depends upon our taking proper note of ὁ πατήρ. The dignity of the work lies in this, that He is the Son whom the Father sanctifies. It is not *God*, but *the Father* ; not the universal Father, but *His* Father, as the correspondence of “Son of God” shows. It is equivalent to “Say ye then of the Son whom the Father hath sanctified.” Jesus accepts the “Thou makest thyself God.” Even the Jews understood this not otherwise than that Jesus made Himself *the Son of God*, in the fullest and most proper sense : comp. ch. v. 18, Πατέρα ἰδιον ἔλεγε τὸν Θεὸν, ἵστον ἑαυτὸν ποιῶν τῷ Θεῷ. It never entered their thoughts that Jesus would do violence to the Father, and place Himself in His stead. Their objection was grounded on the

word, “I and My Father are one,” in which Jesus expressly distinguished Himself from the Father, and limited Himself to the assertion that He was one with Him. But that the declaration, “I am the Son of God,” contained also, “I am God,”—that Jesus did not simply mean to say, “I have not pretended to be God, but only the Son of God,”—is plain from the fact, that only thus the passage in the Psalm has any propriety as an argument, this passage speaking not of sons of God, but of gods. If in the inviolable Divine word those were called gods, how should I not much rather have the right to term Myself God? That the Son of God, as such, is God, is the conclusion to which the words, “I and My Father are one,” rightly understood, lead us,—words which certainly the Lord would not withdraw; as also, “the Father is in Me, and I in Him,” ver. 38, according to which the existences of the Father and of the Son perfectly cover each other, yet so as that the distinction remains, that the Father is the Father, and the Son the Son. Any limitation, if such were intended (De Wette: “He substitutes, on occasion of the misunderstanding in ver. 33, for the idea of unity with the Father, that of the Son of God”), would be much too lightly indicated. Had the Jews attributed more to Jesus than He Himself arrogated, He would, in the presence of Him who gives not His honour to another, have been urged to utter the most emphatic protest. Every transgression of the limit is in this case blasphemy. The Jews, in their zeal for the honour of God, would have been perfectly right in their conduct to Jesus.

In vers. 37, 38, our Lord adds the necessary consummation to His argument. The Jews might answer that this was the matter in question, whether “the Father” had sanctified Him and sent Him into the world. Hitherto it had been proved only that it was not an absolutely and independently unimaginable thing, that humanity and Divinity were not pure opposites. Jesus now shows, by appeal to His works, that what was possible according to Scripture, was actually the fact. “If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. But if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.” The “works of My Father” are the works which My Father doeth: comp. on ch. ix. 3, 6 (Lyser: non solum similia et

æqualia sed eadem cum patre). Jesus supposes a case which could not have become actual. The Son could appear only in the imitation of the works of the Father. It might have been objected that similar works had been wrought by other servants of God in His kingdom—Moses, for instance—without therefore being God. But, on the one hand, the works of Christ far transcended all that had been accomplished in earlier days (comp. ch. ix. 32), even all the mighty wonders of the Mosaic time, in connection with which, as I have shown in my work on “Egypt and the Books of Moses,” there was always a natural point of junction to start from; and, on the other hand, the earlier messengers of God had always declared themselves to be merely ministers and instruments of the Divine will. The works were primarily and directly for the confirmation of that which the worker of them declares concerning His relation to God. But the connection of the works of Christ with the dignity of His Person must be very emphatically insisted upon: they everywhere declare themselves to be the outbeamings of that Person, and as sufficient themselves alone to furnish a solid basis for faith.

“If ye believe not Me,” ver. 38, intimates that they ought at once to have believed Christ Himself; that His entire personality formed the proper ground of faith; and that it was only a concession to infirmity when Christ appealed to the works, which, indeed, could not be wanting: comp. ch. xiv. 11. “That ye may *know* and believe,” points to the fact, that the faith which Scripture requires is not a blind but an intelligent faith, based upon facts: comp. on ch. vi. 19. Even as faith bases itself on the personality of Christ, it is an intelligent faith. But here the *γνῶτε* refers especially to the works. And faith in Christ is even in this aspect an intelligent faith to the present day. The works which Christ performed during His earthly life, are far surpassed by the influences upon Christian nations which have continued from age to age. The reading of Lachmann and Tischendorf, *ἴνα γνῶτε καὶ γινώσκητε*, yields no tolerable sense. “That the Father is in Me, and I in Him:” it is not *ὁ Θεός*, but *ὁ πατήρ*. *God* is in me, might have been said by any holy man. As Father, on the other hand, God is only in Christ: comp. ch. xiv. 10; so that whosoever seeth Him, seeth the Father, ch. xiv. 9. The fact, that the unity between the

Father and the Son is to be reflected in believers, ch. xvii. 21, impairs nothing of its specific character.

Ver. 39. “Therefore they sought again to take Him : but He escaped out of their hand.”—*Πάλιν* cannot refer back to chap. vii. 30, 44, where it is recorded that the Jews sought to *take* Jesus. That circumstance was too distant. It refers to ver. 31. When the Jews there brought the stones, we must connect with it the design to take Jesus. For the taking belongs to the stoning, which must not be confounded with a common casting of stones. The words by which Jesus had sought to bring them to a better mind produced no effect : they returned again to their early purpose. “Out of their hand :” from their power. How He retreated from their power is not recorded ; and for that reason we are not to think of any miracle. The hesitation of their minds crippled the energies of His foes, and thwarted their designs. The manifestation of the Redeemer was of so imposing a character, that even among the obdurate, better impulses could be repressed only by slow degrees. When this was finally accomplished, they destroyed Christ, and in Him destroyed themselves.

## CHAP. X. 40-42.

### CHRIST AT BETHABARA.

It is the manner of St John to set side by side with the hardening of the Jews, the salutary influence of Christ’s preaching on the elect. At the occurrence during the Feast of Dedication, the elect had not spoken or been spoken to. The better side of human nature came, however, soon into exhibition. And of this we have here a record. “When the temple of God became a den of thieves, the Church of God were assembled in an obscure place.”

Ver. 40. “And went away again beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized ; and there He abode.”—The place is Bethabara : comp. on ch. i. 28. First, it was to distinguish it from the second place of baptism, in ch. iii. 23. Why Jesus went away from Jerusalem, is plainly enough intimated in what precedes : He must die in Jerusalem, and not elsewhere ; but not before the Passover. As His hour was not

yet come, He retired for a season from the now madder rage of His enemies. But why did He go to Bethabara in particular ? What follows gives the reason. John had there uttered his first testimony concerning Jesus. The circumstance of our Lord's going there must have brought that fact vividly to the people's remembrance.

Vers. 41, 42. " And many resorted unto Him, and said, John did no miracle : but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on Him there."—" And said :" not indeed to Jesus, but in their own hearts, and to each other. They lay bare the motive which brought them to Christ. What they declare was primarily in honour of John. But whatever was said in acknowledgment of John's claims, must needs include the acknowledgment of Christ also. John indeed wrought no miracle ; but he abundantly manifested himself to be a man of God, by the fact that what he said of Christ was approved true. Although they were probably led by the miracles of Christ to the mention of John's having performed no miracles, yet they were far from the intention of lowering John by this remark in comparison of Jesus. This was not in point ; and the object was rather to exalt John as highly as possible, that his testimony concerning Christ might be exalted. *Πάντα ὅσα,* " all that ever :" they do not limit themselves to what John had said at Bethabara. They include also the far more penetrating witness which he had borne in *Ænon*, ch. iii. 23 seq. Anton : " These compared and collated things carefully, and so they were convinced : consequently they acted better than the others. But what was possible to these, might also have been possible to those."

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